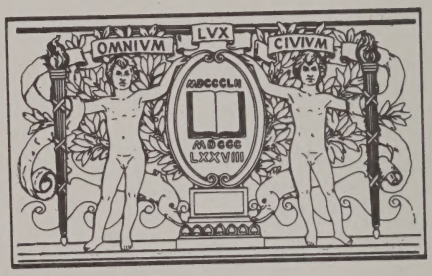
"Crumps"

THE PLAIN STORY OF A CANADIAN WHO WENT

By

LOUIS KEENE



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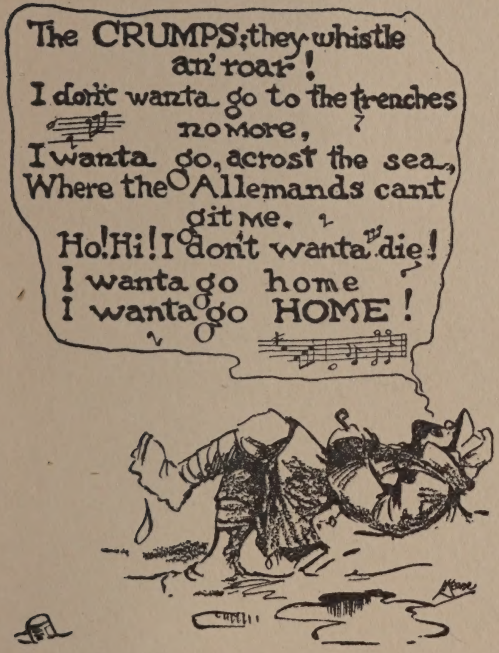
The CRUMPS; they whistle an' roar!
I don't wanta go to the trenches no more,
I wanta go, acrost the sea,
Where the Allemands cant git me.
Ho! Hi! I don't wanta die!
I wanta go home
I wanta go HOME!

THE "SUB"

"CRUMPS"

The Plain Story of a Canadian who went

By LOUIS KEENE
Canadian Expeditionary Force

WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY
GENERAL LEONARD WOOD

Illustrated by the Author

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Prefatory Note

HEADQUARTERS SOUTHEASTERN DEPARTMENT
CHARLESTON, S.C.

11th August, 1917

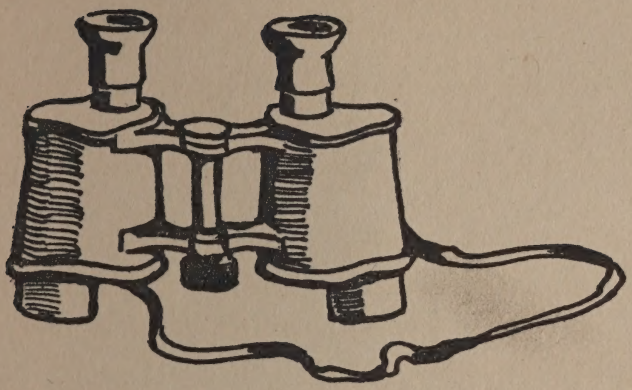
CAPTAIN KEENE has made an interesting contribution to the literature of the present war in his account of service, which covers the experience of a young officer in the making and on the battle front,—the transformation of an artist into a first-class machine-gun officer. He covers the training period at home and abroad and the work at the front. This direct and interesting account should serve to bring home to all of us an appreciation of how much has to be done before troops can be made effective for modern war, the cost of unpreparedness, and the disadvantage under which troops, partially equipped, labor when they meet highly organized ones, prepared, even to the last detail, for all the exigencies of modern war. It also brings

out the splendid spirit of Canada, the Mother Country, and the distant Colonies, — the spirit of the Empire, united and determined in a just cause.

This and similar accounts should serve to make clear to us the wisdom of the admonition of Washington and many others: "In time of peace prepare for war."

Many young Americans are about to undergo experiences similar to those of Captain Keene, and a perusal of this modest and straight-forward narrative will help in the great work of getting ready.

LEONARD WOOD,
Maj.-Gen. U.S.A.



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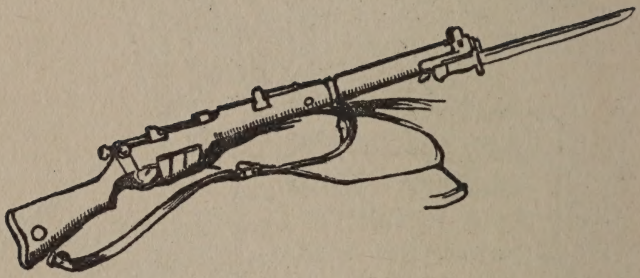
DON'T LINGER
AROUND HERE
THE ENEMY
CAN SEE YOU,
WHO ME? YES YOU
BEAT IT!



"CRUMPS"

The Plain Story of a Canadian who went

THE Laurentian Mountains in the Province of Quebec are noted for their beauty, fine hunting and fishing, and are the stamping-grounds for many artists from the States and Eastern Canada. It was in this capacity that I was working during the hot summer of 1914. All through June and July I sketched with my father. Other than black flies my only worry was the price of my tubes of color.

We usually received our newspapers two or three days after publication; consequently we were poorly posted on worldly happenings. Suddenly the war clouds gathered and almost before we knew it they became so threatening that we grew restless, and even went in to the depot to get our papers so that we could have the news sooner.

Crumps

The assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince and the subsequent events were exciting, but it was only when Russia sent that one word "Mobilize" to Serbia that we suspected serious results. Even the summer visitors from the States exhibited signs of excitement, yet they were skeptical of the chances of war; that is, war that would really affect us! My newspaper in Montreal wired for me to come down to do war cartoons and I left my father and hiked to the depot.

The Montreal train was crowded and conversation centered on the one topic, War; the English Navy's ability to maintain her rule of the seas, and what would Canada do. A young Austrian reservist two seats away was telling some people in a loud voice how much he wanted to get into it. He was going back to answer the call. And I had already begun to hear my country's call.

A newsboy boarding the train at a junction was overwhelmed and succeeded in getting twenty-five cents a copy for his papers.

Montreal teemed with suppressed anxiety and every hour fresh news was posted. Special bulletin boards were put up on store fronts. Already men in uniform were seen in the street. And men were trying to enlist.

The war fever was rising steadily; the chief occupation of Canadians in those days was watching the bulletin boards. Rumors of sea fights, ultimatums, disasters, and victories were common. The Kaiser seemed to declare war on the world at the rate of three countries a day.

On the night of August 4th, as I was putting the finishing touches on a cartoon, a friend burst into the room: — "Come out of here! Something must happen any minute now." We marched downtown, — everybody marched in those days; walking was abolished in its favor. One met demonstrations everywhere, large crowds of cheering men with flags, victrolas at shop windows played patriotic airs, and soldiers with civilians crowded before the bulletin boards singing the national anthems with great

enthusiasm. The King had declared war and his message to the fleet had just been put up! Newspaper extras were given away by thousands and movies of the British Navy were shown on the street. Any one who thought the British could not enthuse, changed his mind then.

The audiences at the theatres and moving picture houses on receipt of the news rose simultaneously and sang the national anthems, then cheered themselves hoarse. These were the first days of the war. Several battalions of militia were called out and posted to protect the bridges and grain elevators. Battalions were raised overnight, and so many recruits came forward that men were refused by the score. England was immediately offered ten battalions. Then an army division was possible. The Militia Department suddenly became a hive of industry. Men with all kinds of business capacity tendered their services gratis, and the Canadian war machine, without the experience of previous cam-

paigns, took shape. They worked night and day bringing everlasting credit on themselves. Banks offered full pay to their employees in uniform, and this example was widely followed. The principle prompting this action being, "It's our country; if we can't fight ourselves, we will help others to fight for her."

Existent camp sites were inadequate, hence new ones were necessary. We had a few, but none were big enough. We bought Valcartier, one of the best sites in the world, which was equipped almost over-night with water service, electric light and drainage. The longest rifle range in the world with three and one-half miles of butts was constructed. Railroad sidings were put in and 35,000 troops from all over the Dominion poured into it. Think of it, — Canada with her population of seven and one-half millions offering 35,000 volunteers the first few weeks, without calling out her militia. And even to-day the militia are yet to be called. Thus every Canadian who has served at

the front has been a volunteer. England accepted an army division. Fifteen hundred qualified officers were told that they would have to stay and train men for the next contingent. But this was not fighting. They were dissatisfied. They resigned their commissions and went as privates. Uniforms, boots, rifles and equipment were found for everybody. Every man was trained as much as possible in the time allowed, and within six weeks of the declaration of war, guns, horses and 35,000 men were going forward to avenge Belgium.

With me the question of signing up was a big one. In the first place, I wanted to go; I wanted to go quickly. Several other fellows and myself had decided upon a certain battalion. But much to our disgust and regret we were informed that enlistments had stopped only a short time before.

Then came the announcement of the organization of the First Auto Machine Gun Brigade, the generous gift of several of

THE CANADIAN

JOHNNIE CANUCK

THE AMERICAN

THE ANZAC

Canada's most prominent citizens, and it was in this unit that I enlisted with my friend Pat, a six-foot, husky Scotchman, with the fighting blood of the kilties very near the surface. We were immediately transported to Ottawa in company with fifty other picked men from Montreal. At Ottawa the complement of our battery was completed upon the arrival of one hundred more men from Ottawa and Toronto. Here we trained until it came time for us to move to Montreal, and there the battery was embarked on board the Corinthian with a unit of heavy artillery. We sailed down to Quebec where we joined the other ships assembled to take over the First Canadian Contingent.

Corinthian, Wednesday, Sept. 30th, 1914.

My dear Mother and Father: —

We are now steaming down the St. Lawrence. No one knows where we are going.

Our fleet is a wonderful sight. All the ships are painted war gray — sides, boats and funnels. We are expecting to pick up

the warships which are to convoy us across at Father Point, somewhere near where the Empress of Ireland was sunk.

Quebec looked very fine. The big guns were being hoisted into boats, horses embarking, and battalion after battalion arriving and going aboard. Those who came from Valcartier have had a rough time. They actually look as if they had come through a campaign. It gave me thrills all day to see these fine men come through the dock-gates with a steady swing. It is a magnificent contribution to any army. It's good to think of all these men coming at their country's call.

Some day, if I get back, I want to paint a picture of the fleet assembled at Quebec. The grays and greens looked really beautiful. Quebec, the city of history and the scene of many big battles, views with disdain the Canadian patriotism in the present crisis, and we had no send-off, no flags and no bands.

This letter will not be mailed for ten days,

until we are well on the way over. We are crowded, and if we are going through the tropics we shall have a bad time; it is cold now, so we don't notice the congestion.

We had one hundred and forty horses aboard and two batteries of heavy artillery, besides our own armored cars. All the transports are crowded. We were passed by about ten of the other boats, and as they did so we cheered each other. The thin lines of khaki on all the ships will make a name for themselves. I'm proud I am one of them.

We 've had a big dose of vaccine pumped into our arms to-day. This will be the last letter I send before I arrive, wherever we are going.

The Corinthian sailed from Quebec to Father Point, where a patrol boat arrived with orders. We then sailed into the Gulf, but toward evening we turned into the coast. When we passed Fame Point Light a small boat, which afterwards turned out to be another patrol boat, sailing without lights,

flashed further orders to us. The Corinthian immediately turned round and headed back. The minute the patrol boat's signal light went out we were unable to distinguish it from the sea. The coloring is a good protection; even a boat, close to, sailing without lights, it is impossible to pick out. Apparently our orders were to cruise around until daylight and then sail for the Bay of Gaspé, and this morning at daybreak we sailed into that beautiful, natural harbor, which is big enough to accommodate the entire British fleet.

I expect that to the villagers living around this harbor all events will date from to-day — to-day, when the wonderful sight of twenty-five ocean liners drawn up in battleship formation in this quiet place, deserted except for an occasional visit from a river steamer or fishing craft, greeted their gaze.

Five gray fighting ships are mounting guard, and by their signals and pinnaces chasing backward and forward between the troopers are bossing the show. A corporal,

THE TRANSPORT FLEET

a South African War veteran, as we looked at them, quoted Kipling's

> "The liner she's a lady
> With the paint upon 'er face,
> The man o' war's 'er 'usband
> And keeps 'er in 'er place."

Towards noon a smart launch came alongside. Even at a distance the boys were quick to recognize our popular minister of militia, Sam Hughes, and a thundering cheer rang out. With him were several soldiers who threw bundles of papers aboard. These were printed copies of his farewell to the troops. His launch sailed by the ship, and then on to the next and so on, through the fleet.

Our orders forbade the display of lights or even striking of matches after 6 P. M.; consequently all lights were masked to-night on the vessels, except those on the Royal Edward. The minute her lights were put out the Bay resumed its normal condition, not even the outlines of the vessels being visible.

A press photographer on a launch has been taking pictures all the afternoon. Sailed at

five o'clock this afternoon just as the twilight commenced. We sailed out in three lines. The convoy is now under way and we extend as far as can be seen in both directions. We have two military police patrols whose chief duty is to see that no matches are struck on deck. Bill, who smokes more matches than tobacco, has had to go below so often to light his pipe, that he has decided to do without smoking on deck. It is surprising how far a match struck in the dark will show. We noticed how matches struck on the other ships showed up last night. All our portholes are screwed down with the heavy weather irons and those of the second-class cabins are covered with blankets. The authorities are taking no chances.

We are having physical drills and lectures all day, and we are working just as hard on board as we would ashore. Our speed will not be more than nine knots; the speed of the slowest vessel regulating the speed of the whole fleet.

Matches are getting very scarce. We complained about the tea to the orderly officer to-day; milk is running out, so the tea is made with milk and sugar in. We asked to have the three separate, but we were told that if we complained we would have all three taken away. As a floor stain it's great, but as tea it's a failure.

We are quartered in the steerage part of the ship and our food is in keeping. It is really remarkable how they can consistently get that same coal-oil flavor in all the food.

War news is signaled from ship to ship by semaphore flags by day. It is posted up in the guard room daily. The news that the Indian troops landed in France on the 29th of September was the chief item on the bulletin yesterday. We're short on things to read. Scraps of newspapers are devoured, even to the advertisements. In our cabin we have a "Saturday Evening Post" of September 26th which is thumb-marked and torn, but it is still treasured. We were not

allowed to bring anything besides our kit on board on account of the limited space.

Reveille blows at six o'clock and we have to answer the roll-call at 6.15. The idea is, that if the men get up and walk about, they are not so likely to get seasick, but in spite of that quite a number are sick. We have on board one hundred of our brigade; two hundred and sixteen heavy artillery and one hundred and forty horses, together with artillery officers and equipment. The horses take up the same space which in ordinary times is occupied by humans. Otherwise, we should have a great many more troops. Our destination is still a mystery. We're a fleet without a port.

Have just been ordered on fatigue to take a prisoner on deck for exercise. He is to be tried by court-martial to-morrow for striking a sergeant. All day he is kept locked up and only allowed out at night for exercise, under escort. The escort consists of two men and a non-com. While on this job we watched the signalers flashing the war news from the stern

of our boat to the bridge of the next astern, the Virginian. The news is flashed at night by the lamps — short and long flashes. The news is picked up by wireless on the flagship, the Charybdis, at the head of our line and signaled back from ship to ship.

This is the list of the fleet. It is written here in the order in which they are sailing. Three warships are heading the fleet; the flagship is the H.M.S. Charybdis, commanded by Admiral Wemyss, who distinguished himself a few weeks ago in the Battle of Heligoland.

H.M.S. Diana	H.M.S. Eclipse	H.M.S. Charybdis	
Caribbean	Megantic	Scotian	
Athenia	Ruthenia	Arcadian	
Royal Edward	Bermudian	Zealand	
Franconia	Alaunia	Corinthian [1]	H.M.S. Glory
Canada	Ivernia	Virginian	
Monmouth	Scandinavian	Sasconia	
Manitou	Sicilian	Grampian	
Tyrolia	Montezuma	Andania	
Tunisian	Lapland	Montreal	
Laurentic	Cassandra	Laconia	
		Royal George	
		H.M.S. Talbot	

[1] The transport on which I was shipped.

The H.M.S. Glory, the vessel on our starboard beam, altered her course to-day and

held up a tramp steamer. We could just see the two vessels through our glasses. Apparently everything was all right as the tramp was allowed to go on her way afterwards.

We are all given our boat stations. This afternoon a submarine alarm was sounded. Everybody on board, including the stewards, had to drop everything and chase to the boats. In the excitement a cook shot a "billy" of soup over an officer's legs, much to our silent delight.

Thinking it over, it will be remarkable if the Germans allow us to cross without making some attempt to sink a few transports. Besides the actual loss of the men, the demoralizing effect it will have on the recruiting would count a great deal. No man likes to be shot or drowned without a show.

I am writing this in my cabin, which is only nine feet by six feet and in which six of us sleep at night. Besides living in it we have

to keep all our equipment clean, which is some job!

About eleven this morning a commotion occurred in the middle line. The cruiser heading it and the second ship, the Royal Edward, turned back. Also several other boats turned in their course. As we have very little excitement we hoped it might be a German attack, for we all want to see a naval battle. I looked at the cruiser through powerful glasses and saw sailors fixing up the starboard lifeboat, so we presumed that it was simply a case of "man overboard."

A big cruiser has joined our fleet and is acting as a flank guard about three miles away from our starboard side.

We have a great deal of physical exercise in spite of the rolling of the deck. This morning, while in the middle of it I was called away to dress and form part of an escort to the prisoner who was to be tried by field court-martial to-day. The court was very dignified, and it took a long time owing to the inexperience of the officers in such

matters. It was the first court-martial I have seen, — the proceedings are strictly legal, being conducted according to the book, and with the officers wearing their swords. The poor devil expects two years.

We have been pitching and tossing a great deal to-day. Physical exercising on the sloping decks is becoming a mighty risky thing.

Quite a number of the transports have guns mounted on board so they are not entirely dependent on the cruisers. It looks as if we are sailing north of the usual trade routes. I have just heard that five more battleships are on the starboard beam. They came into sight early this morning, but have since been out of sight. We are sailing north of the trade routes.

The fleet is being increased. All ships are stopped. Those sailing west are allowed to go after being boarded; those going in the same direction as ourselves are made to fall into line, so there will be no danger of the news of our sailing reaching Europe ahead

of us. If we continue to pick up ships sailing in our direction, the fleet will be enormous by the time we arrive at our unknown destination. We sailed two hundred and twelve miles the last twenty-four hours.

Two more transports have joined us. They came from Newfoundland. I hear that we now have forty-three ships in the fleet. We sail at ten cables' length apart, about one thousand yards.

We are getting into more dangerous water evidently. Early this morning the Royal George steamed up from the end of the line and took up a position at the head of the fleet, but in line with the battleship Glory about three miles away on the port. The Laurentic took up a similar position on the starboard. Both these ships are armored and have guns mounted on them. They are being used as scouts.

We all rushed up on deck to see a cruiser pass close to us this midday. It was a magnificent sight. She was either the H.M.S. Bristol or the H.M.S. Essex; her name was painted

out. The bluejackets were massed on the decks forward and as she went by the marines' band played "The Maple Leaf Forever." We returned cheers with the sailors. It gives you a great thrill to see a British ship and to have the knowledge of what it represents. To be British is a great thing, and I'm proud to think that I'm going to fight for my country. When this war is over and men are talking round a table, it will be, "Where were you fighting during the war?" not "Did you fight during the war?"

I'm in a gun-cleaning squad every afternoon. To-day I cleaned the machine gun on which I'm second gunner. We treat our machine guns as if they were pets. No one will ever be able to say that my gun is dirty. It will probably be my best friend some day.

The finding of the court-martial was read out to us on full parade this afternoon. First the "Heavies" were lined up on all sides of the deck, then the "Mosquitos," as the Machine Gunners are called, lined up

inside; the prisoner between an escort was led up in the center. It was wonderfully impressive. I felt that I was to witness the condemning of a fellow soldier to a number of years of hard labor. Over the whole assembly there came a deathlike silence and the finding of the court was read to us by an officer; the sentence being thirty-six days!

The second steward told me that it took two hundred carpenters twelve hours to tear down the cabins and fix up horse fittings. First the authorities made arrangements to ship a thousand troops on this ship We're crowded as we are now with only three hundred odd. I hate to think what it would have been like with a thousand.

Early this morning a large man-o'-war came up on the port at a speed that made everything else seem to stop. We have now battleships on all sides. This ship, although a long way off, looks tremendous. She is one of the latest super-dreadnaughts.

I was on guard last night when one of the

cruisers came alongside to TALK to the captain about having lights showing in some of the ports. I enjoyed it immensely, for I discovered that the British Navy, true to tradition, was still able to maintain its high level of profanity. The ship is in pitch darkness and there is no moon. On deck it's almost impossible to walk it's so dark. To night is supposed to be the night on which the Germans are going to make a raid. I am going to sleep on deck so that I shall not miss anything. I'd hate to miss the chance of seeing a naval engagement. I can't see how the Germans can possibly let a chance go by. A nervy cruiser could sink any amount of ships. If the British Navy were up against us they would have had a cut in before now.

Slept on deck last night. Nothing happened except that early this morning a French cruiser joined us, and I got covered with smuts from the smokestack.

The Admiral has received one hundred and twenty-six words of war news, but will

not let us have them. Probably they're disastrous. We break up to-night or to-morrow. It's scarcely likely that the whole fleet will be taken to one port at the same time.

That super-dreadnaught passed down the columns to-day. She is of tremendous size and travels at high speed. She is probably the Queen Mary.

Expect to see land Wednesday.

Blowing a gale. All day the spendrift has been blowing over. The decks have been too wet for parades, thank God! All the way over we have had physical exercise, sometimes as much as four hours a day. We're all in fine physical condition.

To-day we were allowed to wash our clothes. I can see the advantage of khaki now. Even after working hard on my clothes, my underwear is still dark white. The rails were covered with underwear and socks when the storm started. Now every square inch below is used for drying

clothes. Even the electric lights are festooned. We have a final kit inspection to-morrow and then we pack for disembarkation. We are only about one hundred miles from the "Bishop's Light."

It has been a very long voyage and we have been very cramped. All our equipment has to be carried in our cabins. Try sleeping six men with all their outfit in a cabin nine feet by six feet. The ship carpenter has a standing job to repair our cabin. We have rough-housed so much that his attention was continually necessary. The trip has been so long that we are now beginning to hate each other. I went down in the stoke-hole and the engine-room. Even amongst the whirling machines it was more peaceful than in our quarters. It seems months since I was in Montreal last.

Dear Old England in sight!

We're passing the Lizard now.

The kit has all been inspected and we hope to land to-morrow some time.

Crumps

We're lying in the historic harbor of Plymouth; arrived here about two hours ago. We're surrounded by fast little torpedo-boat destroyers, which are chasing round us all the time like dogs loosened from a chain. The breakwater has searchlights mounted on each end and fixed lights are playing from the shore. As the lights occasionally flash up the ships in the bay, it is as bright as day. Nobody is allowed ashore, not even the officers. We may go on to Southampton, only we must get there before five at night. After that time nothing is allowed in.

Sailed at daybreak on to Devonport. Most of the transports are now lying in pairs at anchor in the harbor. We're close to the shore. We can see naval "jolly boats" and pinnaces sailing back and forth. On one side are lying the H.M.S Powerful and another boat, both of which in their day were the pride of the Navy. The Powerful was the boat which made such a name for herself in the Boer War. Now both of these

vessels are training ships and obsolete so far as this war goes.

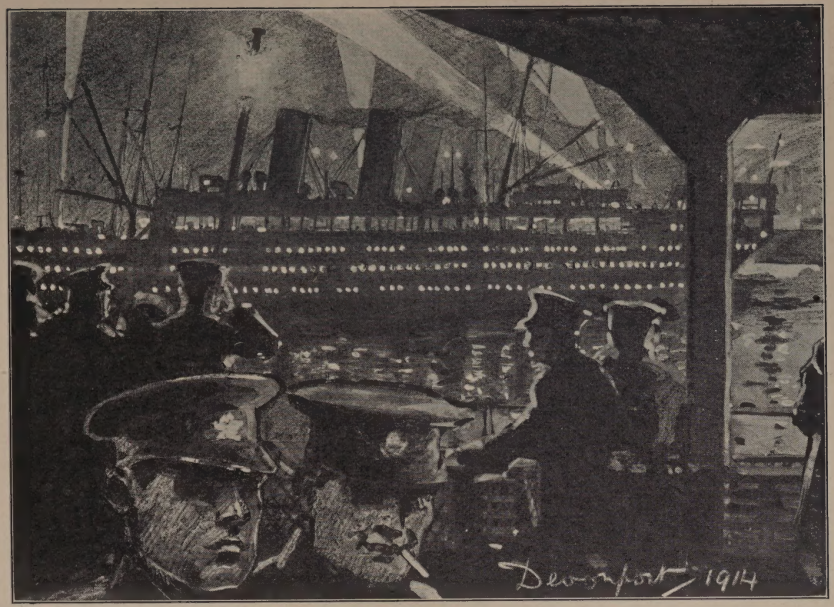
All our haversacks have been boiled in coffee to stain them khaki.

One of the Navy steam launches came by and we asked them to get us newspapers. They came back with a bundle and we nearly had a riot trying to get at them.

It was only to-day that we heard of the fall of Antwerp, the atrocities of Belgium, and the treachery of Maritz in Cape Colony.

We shall be getting off in a few hours and this may be the last I shall write for some time. I have put in a great deal of time during the voyage writing and have done so under difficulties. Sometimes the cabin has been torn in pieces, and often arguments, carried on by leather-lunged opponents of "Kultur," have made this work hard.

We hear that some paper published an account of the sinking of twenty of the ships. This rumor is false, and it's a beastly thing for the newspaper to do, but you must remember to discount all news a great deal.



AT DEVONPORT

Still on board and we shall probably be here for a few days more. My, it's galling to be so near to the land and yet to be cooped up in our crowded quarters. Crowded launches and steamers are sailing round the liners. All day long cheering crowds come out to see us. Last night another liner called Florizel, with the First Regiment Newfoundland troops, tied up to us. They were a fine-looking lot of men. We told them we had no tobacco; they threw dozens of tins of their tobacco and cigarettes over to us. We fought for them. I got the remains of one tin with most of the contents spilt. Still, as many of us have n't had a smoke for three days, we appreciated it. Several cruisers have come in to-day, and there seem to be dozens of submarines and torpedo boats cruising around all day. The reason we did not go to Southampton is that five German submarines were waiting for us.

The transports are unloading at the rate of five or six ships a day. It will probably be our turn on Sunday. The fleet looks splendid at

night now that we have most of the lights on. All night the steel riveters are at work on three battleships that are being built close by. Near us are several "wooden walls." One is a ship of Nelson's, the Queen Adelaide. Every boat, tug, lighter and motor boat here is the property of the Admiralty.

We are probably going to Salisbury Plain for two months. We are the first Expeditionary Force to land in England from the dominions or colonies, but others are on their way. The sailors from the training ships serenade us in boats with bands and play "O Canada," "The Maple Leaf Forever," and all day long on one ship or the other we hear "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." Every one is singing it; without doubt it is *the* song of the war. To-day we got a bundle of papers. We read them right through to the advertisements. Cigarettes and matches are at a premium and food is running out on board. The strain of staying here is becoming too great. We're all disagreeable and

insubordinate. The guard room is already full and will soon need enlarging.

On guard to prevent the men of the two ships (our own and the Florizel with the Newfoundlanders) coming over to visit each other. At ten o'clock at night I got the tip that a bunch of men were going to make a break for shore and I was asked to go. I had just come off sentry and was dressed for shore. We all met up forward, hailed a police boat, climbed down a rope ladder across two barges unloading shells and into the police launch. When I got in I found that I and one other fellow were the only privates; all the rest were sergeants and corporals, thirteen altogether, unlucky number. The police sergeants asked me if we had passes. I said, "You bet," and we sailed away from the ship right under everybody's nose. We landed and then took a car to Plymouth and went on the Hoe, which has been in absolute darkness since the beginning of the war. Girls were very interested in us and took most of our collar badges and but-

tons as souvenirs. One man asked me to give him a cigarette as a souvenir.

We met an English captain in a tobacconist's and he invited us up to the barracks. Two of us went. I was one. To get there we had to go on a street car. We had just sat down when up the stairs came my Lieutenant McCarthy. When he saw me he said, "How the hell did you get here?" "Oh, just swam across." "Well, if you get caught it'll be the guard room for you." I said, "Never mind, we'll have company." He is a pretty good sport. We went to the barracks, had a session with the captain, then went to the quay, picked up the rest of the men, and sneaked on board. I got to bed at three and had to get up this morning at six o'clock to go on guard.

Sunday, very tired. On guard all day, two hours on, four off. It's very unfortunate having a Sunday guard, because in the ordinary way we have to attend church parade in the morning and after having listened

to a sermon and sung "Onward, Christian Soldiers," or, "Fight the good fight," we are free for the day, whereas guards stay on twenty-four hours.

The major noticed one of the sergeants coming on board this morning at six o'clock. The idiot missed us this morning and of course that dished us. The sergeants got in wrong. As I am only a private, and therefore ignorant and simple according to the military code, and, being with non-commissioned officers who are supposed to possess superior intelligence, I got away with it. The sergeants have had to do sentry on the same ladder we went down.

Everybody is as disagreeable as possible. We are lying in midstream and can see the town. Can you imagine anything more galling than that?

While I was on guard the Vicar of Plymouth came aboard and held service. He said that the last time a Vicar of Plymouth preached to warriors was just before Drake sailed to meet the Armada.

Thank God! moving at last. We've moored up to the docks just opposite two magnificent dreadnaughts. Naval men are handling our cargo, our kit bags are packed and we are ready to disembark.

Near our ship's stern is a barge full of ventilators and spare parts of ships which are taken away when ships are cleared for action. Some of the rifle racks were marked Cornwall and I noticed a davit post with the name Highflyer, the boat that sank the Kaiser Wilhelm after she had been preying on the shipping off South Africa. When a ship is cleared for action, all inflammable fittings, such as wooden doors, ladders, racks, extra boats, and davits, etc., are discarded. If the order to "clear the decks for action" comes at sea, overboard go all these luxuries. It is calculated that the cost of "clearing decks" on a cruiser is five thousand dollars.

Some of our stuff was unloaded yesterday, and when the ship moved a guard was placed over it. When the corporal went down the gangplank with the relief, Pat and I walked

down behind as if we were part of the same, right by the officers. We had a devil of a job to get through the dock gates, a suspicious policeman and sentry on guard. We told the sergeant of the police a pitiful story, saying that we had n't had anything to eat for three days, and finally he relented. "All right, my lads, only don't 'swing the lead' in town." We got into Devonport and went to the biggest hotel. Before they had time to throw us out we ordered breakfast of real food. It was fine after the ship's grub. After sitting there ten minutes, the general commanding the district came in and sat behind us. He stared. Two privates in the same room as the general!! But all he said was, "If you boys can fight as you eat, you 'll make an impression." Then we visited some other places!

We went back to the docks and went over the super-dreadnaughts, Tiger and Benbow, the biggest war vessels in the world. The Tiger's speed on her trials was 37.5 knots an hour.

After we had seen enough, we went back to the ship and tried to look as if we had been working with one of the fatigue parties on shore. It worked!

We marched off the ship midday and then I had to go on guard again all night. That was the first time we were allowed ashore to see the town, and I was on guard, so if I had n't slipped ashore on the two occasions mentioned, I should not have seen it at all.

It rained all night, and when I was off guard I slept on the top of one of our armored trucks, under a tarpaulin. It's wonderful how we can sleep now anywhere, and we often have our clothes on for three days at a time. Many a time I sleep with all my equipment on. Get wet and dry it by keeping it on. We all have to do it. The idea of pajamas or baths as necessities seems funny. At one time I would sooner go without breakfast than miss a bath. Now I make sure of the breakfast.

We are going to drive our cars through

England to Salisbury Plain. We started this morning and drove through Devonport. Cheering crowds everywhere. All our cars wear the streaming pennants: "Canada With the Empire," which pleased the people a great deal.

As we rode through the streets people showered gifts upon us, such as cakes, chocolates, newspapers and apples, and everywhere made lusty demonstrations. The people of Taunton, as soon as they heard that the Canadians were coming, turned out the barracks and we were met by all the officers, who came in to talk to us. One second lieutenant, after studying me for some time, said, "Is n't your name Keene?" "Yes," I replied, "but how do you know?" "I went to school with you fifteen years ago." His name was Carter; he was in the Second Dorsets. That night he got me out of barracks for a couple of hours, and we hashed over the schoolboy reminiscences. The people of Taunton were arranging a dance for us, but nobody was allowed to attend. The major

believes in putting us to bed early; his theory being that a man can't drive cars well after a party, and he could n't keep the drivers in alone.

Ladies from Taunton, of the pleasing English type with beautiful complexions, handed round all sorts of rubbish, jam puffs, and other things which belong to the time before we joined the army.

Traveled all the morning. Everybody turned out to see us. The Brigadier-General wired ahead, and hastily prepared placards, still wet, were hanging from the windows, —

God Bless the Canadians
Loyal Sons
of
The Empire

The gathering of
the Lions' whelps

and in one case the haste was so great that "God Save the King" was hung upside down.

Everybody wants my badges and buttons,

and some men in the unit have not one left. Hence I have requisitioned an order for a hundred to meet the demand.

All over the country you see "Kitchener's Army" drilling. In one case we passed about a hundred of them. When they saw us they broke ranks and shook us by the hands. The people of England are much impressed with our speed in coming over. Old men and women shouted, "God bless you, Canadians!" while tears trickled down their cheeks.

I read this notice in one little shop, —

> At noon every day the church bell will ring a few chimes and everybody is asked to stop whatever he is doing and offer this prayer, "Oh, Lord, help our soldiers and sailors to defeat our enemies, and let us have Peace."
>
> (Signed) The Vicar.

Recruiting notices ten feet by six feet with the sentence "Your King and Country Need You" are to be seen everywhere in shops, on barns, trees, and even church doors.

Motorists and cyclists are warned to pull up whenever requested or the results may be

serious. Most of the motors have O.H.M.S. plates above the number plate.

We billeted in a village school; all slept in our blankets on the floor. Left the school and cleaned up before the kids came for their lessons next day.

Salisbury Plain. Arrived to-day. This part is called Bustard and takes its name from the small Bustard Inn, Headquarters of General Alderson, General Officer Commanding. Troops are here in thousands and we are no novelty. The roads are torn up. Mud is two feet deep in places. All through the day and night motor lorries, artillery and cavalry are traveling over the ground. Aeroplanes are circling overhead and heavy artillery are firing. We see the shells bursting on the ranges every day.

Always raining. Everything is wet, and I am sleeping in a rotten tent which leaks. Still, we are all so fit that what would kill an ordinary man does n't worry us much.

We all get three days' leave and are trying

by every means possible to wangle another day or two. Many men have to see dentists, and lots of men have grandparents in Scotland who display signs of dying suddenly. If the excuse is good enough, we get four days and sometimes five. I have a sweetheart in Scotland, but if that is played out I have to work something else.

Wonderful sight from where I am now. Miles of tents, motors and horse lines on this desolate moorland. No houses; only camps and a few trees which have been planted as wind screens. The soil is very poor, too poor for farming. It is government property and it is only used for troops. We are ten miles from a railroad. We are so isolated that we might be in Africa, except that it's so cold.

The papers are starting an agitation to get the Canadians to march through London, and are asking why they should be smuggled in and then shut up on Salisbury Plain. They want to see us, AND WE WANT TO SEE LONDON!!

Our ambulance car has been used every day since we came here, taking wounded from one hospital to another. The rest of our cars have been used to carry German prisoners.

One of the spies caught on the ships is said to have been shot. Several were arrested; two were caught in Devonport while we were there, one in a Canadian officer's uniform.

Am spending seventy-two hours' leave in London. Got leave through this telegram which is from "the girl I'm engaged to":

Disappointed. Met train. Please do come. Leaving for Belgium soon. Love.

EDYTHE.

She is a Red Cross nurse. This is a new one and it worked. McCarthy sent it to me.

London is very dismal. No electric signs, and the tops of all the street lamps are painted black so that the lights don't show from above. However, we managed to have a

good time, in spite of it all. The Germans say that the Canadians are being held in England to repel the invasion.

The facilities for bathing are not very extensive. I rode into Salisbury, a distance of seventeen miles, yesterday, on top of some packing-cases in a covered transport wagon, for a bath, the first since I was last on leave. We get a Turkish bath in town for thirty cents. After that we had a large juicy steak and then started our seventeen-mile trip back through the pouring rain. Every other mile we got down and helped the driver swear and push the car out of the mud, vast quantities of which abound on the Salisbury roads, believe me!!

It is Sunday afternoon. Most of the men in camp are asleep or reading. Outside it is raining. It seems to be always raining, and occasionally we have such a thick fog that even a trip to get water is exciting before you can get back to your own lines.

Crumps

Owing to our camp having become a swamp we have had to move our quarters to drier ground. Moving the tents is not a big job, but rebuilding the cook-house is! I figure that when I leave the army I shall have a few more professions to choose from. For example, I'm a pretty hefty trench digger; then as a scavenger I am pretty good at picking up tin cans and pieces of paper; also I'm an expert in building things such as shelters from any old pieces of timber that we can steal; then as a cook I can now make that wonderful tea that I wrote you about, besides many other things which we did n't realize that we had to do when we enlisted.

To-day the paper says "Fair and Warmer." We could do with some of that. Years ago, before I joined the army and lost my identity, I rather liked occasionally getting wet in the refreshing rain; but now the trouble is that we are always wet and have nowhere to dry our things, except by sleeping on them.

Our major has an original scheme of train-

ing men in the ranks to qualify for commissions, sort of having half a dozen embryo officers ready. I have been picked as one and have to study in all my spare time. It means a great deal more work, but it's very interesting and the sort of thing I would like to do. We start to-day.

We began our instruction on the machine gun to the officers and the men who are up here for a special course; I have a boozy lieutenant, who does n't care a hang, and a bright non-com. Some of the officers we brought over make good mascots.

It was fine to-day. We were even able to open up the tent flap to dry the place a bit. To-day the major congratulated me on the Christmas card I designed for the unit.

Our classes of instruction to the "alien" officers finish to-morrow. Both the men I was instructing passed.

The adjutant is very anxious to put us through our officers' training course quickly.

We are now recognized as the specialist corps in the machine-gun work with the Canadian Division, and he is anxious that we shall be ready to take commissions when casualties occur. Every battalion of infantry has a machine-gun section attached, and we have the job of training the officers and sergeants of these sections.

Owing to the bombardment of the east coast, several of our battalions are under orders to move at a moment's notice. It is thought that the bombardment was simply a ruse to draw the British fleet away from around Heligoland.

The newspaper boys in Salisbury, when you refuse to buy an "Hextra," shout "Montreal Star" and "Calgary Eyeopener," and all the shopgirls and barmaids in Salisbury say, "Some kid," "Believe muh," "Oh, Boy!"

I had been granted Christmas leave at the last minute, and as it was awkward to tele-

graph to Northwich, I arrived after a long journey, lasting sixteen hours, ten minutes ahead of the letter I'd sent saying I was coming. My arrival soon spread over the town. A Canadian — this was a rather unique thing for Northwich, a little Cheshire town. Out of a population of about eighteen thousand, two thousand men have joined the colors. The men in uniform from the works are all receiving half pay. The other men who are staying are working twelve hours a day and give up part of their pay so that the jobs of the soldiers will be open when they come back. Thirty-five Belgian refugees are being kept here. Money to keep them for twelve months has been subscribed. One huge house has been taken over as a hospital with twenty-three nurses, all volunteers from Northwich. Everybody has done or is doing something in the great struggle. The young ladies in this neighborhood have no use for a man who is not in khaki, and with customary north of England frankness tell them so.

I expect that you know that the Govern-

ment has sent around forms to every house asking the men who are going to volunteer to sign, and men long past the military age have signed the papers, "too old for the war service, but willing to serve either at home or abroad voluntary for the period of the war." Others have offered to do work to allow young men to go, to keep their jobs for them. This shows the spirit that permeates England. There is only one end and that MUST be the crushing of the Germans. I don't believe people have any idea of the number of men who are at present under arms, and still, the posters everywhere say that we must have more men.

I wonder if you know that the Germans are shooting British prisoners who are found with what they consider insulting post-cards of the Kaiser, and even references to His All Highest in letters are dangerous. As we are nearing the time when we shall go across I thought I would mention it.

We expect to leave England somewhere around January 15th. We have been living in

the mud so long that we are getting quite web-footed.

This is a war Christmas. People are too excited and anxious to celebrate it. I wonder what sort of a Christmas the next one will be! What a terrible Christmas the Germans must have had in Germany. They admit over one million casualties. Fancy a million in less than five months. During the Napoleonic wars, which extended over twenty years, six million died, and yet one side in this war already admits one million.

The Canadian ordnance stores have been given instructions that all equipments down to the last button must be ready by the 15th of January. That date seems to be the favorite one. I believe it is the commencement of big things; a move will then be made to embark large numbers of troops across to France.

All our telegraphic addresses were taken when we came away on leave in case it were decided to send units over before our term of leave expired.

A German aviator flew over Dover yesterday and made a fierce and terrible bomb attack on a cabbage patch. Terrible casualty in cabbages. Berlin must have designs on a bumper crop of sauerkraut.

Back in camp. It was hard to come down to it. Our blankets and clothes left in the tent were mildewed, clammy, and partly submerged. Our feet are wet and we are again soldiers, dirty and cold.

Traveled down in the train with thirty-six men of the Canadian contingent who had formed an escort for fifty-six undesirables who have been shipped back to Canada. It seems strange when men are needed so badly to ship them back because they are a bit unruly or get drunk too often. They will all come back with future contingents. Six of them made a dash for it at Liverpool. Three of them got away altogether.

It snowed yesterday. Last night the camp looked beautiful; the tents lit up through the snow in the moonlight made a pretty picture,

a suitable subject for a magazine cover, but mighty uncomfortable to camp in.

In a gale last night many tents were blown down. We spent all day putting them up again. The cook house, a substantial frame building, has also blown down again.

When I got back I found a Christmas hamper, a bunch of holly and a small box of maple sugar and packet of cigarettes from the Duchess of Connaught with her Christmas card. All parcels for the troops came in duty free. Our postal system is very efficient. We get our letters as regularly as we would in a town.

People send us so many cigarettes that we sometimes have too many. I wish we could get more tobacco and fewer cigarettes. If you remember during the Boer War the authorities tried to break the "Tommy" of his "fags" by giving him more tobacco. Now they really seem to encourage cigarette smoking, although it really does n't matter; the same things which are harmful in towns

don't have the same bad effects when we are living in the open.

All leave is up by the 10th of January for everybody, officers and men.

The Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry have gone to the front to the envy of everybody. It is a splendid battalion with fine officers. They have been lying next to our lines and we have made many friends with the "Pats."

Cerebro-spinal meningitis has broken out, and in spite of all efforts to check it, seems to be gaining ground. Several officers have died with it, and I believe that four battalions are quarantined. We have to use chloride of lime on the tent floors and around the lines. My friend Pat calls it "Spike McGuiness." The worst of a disease like this is that a patient never recovers. Even a cure means partial paralysis for life. I believe that Salisbury Plain is known for it, and I hear that all the ground that troops are now occupying is to be ploughed up when we leave. As far as that goes we have ploughed

it up a bit already, but a systematic ploughing will make it more regular. The subsoil is only four inches, then you come to chalky clay. The tent-pegs when they are taken from the ground are covered with chalk.

I think that the Canadian Contingent has had a pretty raw deal. We're not even included in the six army divisions which are going to France by the end of March. Wish I had joined the "Princess Pats," who are already there. We want to fight.

We're having a beastly time as compared with the Belgian refugees and the German prisoners in England. We're beginning to wonder if we are ever going to the front. There is now some talk of billeting us in Bristol. We've been under arms nearly five months and should be good fighting material by now. With a similar number of men the Germans would have done something by this time.

All the last week the selected few of us have been working separately on a course of work

to qualify us for commissions. We have had to study hard every spare minute when not drilling each other.

Several dogs have attached themselves to us; sometimes they find themselves on a piece of string, the other end being in a man's hand. One of these, a big bull terrier, sleeps in the canteen. The beer is quite safe with him there, but two nights ago the canteen tent, after a great struggle, tore itself off the tent-poles and went fifteen feet up in the air like a balloon, then collapsed. The dog, I regret to say, did not stay at his post, so a quantity of beer will have to be marked down as lost. This same bull has a pal, a white bull terrier, who came out with the officers' class the other morning. We had not been drilling more than fifteen minutes when he came back with a large rabbit. We stewed it at night. It certainly was good.

One of the mechanics has forged an Iron Cross which has been presented to the dog in recognition of his services.

I doubt if I shall ever be able to sit up to a

table again regularly. I would much sooner sleep on the floor, and I have found, when on leave, that I preferred sitting on a hearth-rug to a chair. Even while writing this I am lying on my blankets. My pipe is burnt down on one side from lighting it from my candle.

To-day being Sunday and as there were only two of us left in the tent, the others being on leave, we gave it a thorough spring cleaning. It needed it! By some oversight the sun came out to-day, so that helped. We also washed up all our canteens and pannikins with disinfectant.

The infantry are bayonet-fighting and practicing charges every day. If you want a thrill, see them coming over the top at you with a yell; the bayonets catch the light and flash in a decidedly menacing fashion. They practice on dummies, and are so enthusiastic that they need new dummies almost every lesson.

Every man, on becoming a soldier, becomes

a man with a number and an identification disk. My number is 45555 and my "cold meat ticket," a tag made of red fiber, is hanging round my neck on a piece of string.

We're packing up and expect to go away next week. Of course, it may be another bluff, but somehow I think we really are going now, as we have been fitted out with a "field service-dressing," a packet containing two bandages and safety pins, which we have to sew into the right-hand bottom corner of our tunics. We have also been given our active service pay book, a little account book in which we have our pay entered. We don't get paid much in the field. We carry this book instead.

It seems always cold and wet. We are very hardened. We look tough and feel that way. I have n't had a bath for a month. Since I have been soldiering I have done every dirty job that there is in the army, and there are many. Often when a job seemed to be too dirty and too heavy for anybody

else, they looked around for Keene and Pat.

"On guard." Writing this in the guard tent, when we are not actually on sentry. We keep all our equipment on, as we are liable to be called out at any minute. We sleep with our belts and revolvers in place.

A quarter guard is three men and a non-com. The men do two hours on and four off. When it comes to a man's turn he has to be on his beat no matter what the weather is like during the day or night. The cold is pretty bad and occasionally it snows. Some units have sentry boxes, but we have n't. We use a bell tent. I was called this morning at five o'clock to do my sentry from five to seven. The small oil stove which serves to heat the guard tents had evidently been smoking for an hour, and over everything was a thick film of lamp-black. Everybody thought it a great joke until they looked at themselves in the mirror and caught sight of their own equipment. We must come off

guard as clean as we go on. I got out quickly and left them swearing and cleaning up.

From five to seven is the most interesting relief. I had first to wake the cooks at five o'clock and then I watched the gradual waking up of the camp. At six o'clock I had to wake the orderly sergeants and then far away in the distance the first bugle sounded reveille, then it was taken up all around and gradually the camps all over the Plains woke up. Men came out of the tents, the calls for the "fall in" sounded, and the rolls were called and the usual business of the day commenced. The change from the deadness of the night with its absolute stillness all takes place in a very short time. To a person with any imagination it seems rather wonderful. You must remember that we can see for miles, and in every direction there are hundreds of tents. Each battalion is separate, and they have great spaces between them; still wherever you look you can see tents.

Crumps

I wonder if I told you that aeroplanes are all the time flying over our camp. With characteristic British frankness they always have two huge Union Jacks painted on the undersides of the wings. We have become so used to them that we scarcely trouble to look up unless they are doing stunts.

The frost makes a fine grip for the cars; when the ground freezes over we can take the cars anywhere, but unfortunately it thaws again too quickly. As we are a motor battery we are of course a mile from the road, and sometimes it takes an hour and a half to get on to it.

It is a howling night, wind and rain galore. I'm wondering how long the tent will last. I have been out three times already to look at the tent pegs. How often it has been so since we first came on to these plains. If you are living in tents you notice the changes in weather more than under ordinary circumstances, and every rain-storm has meant

wet feet for us. But now we have been given new black boots, magnificent things, huge, heavy "ammunition boots," and the wonderful thing is they don't let water in. They are very big and look like punts, but it's dry feet now. I can tell you I am as pleased with them as if some one had given me a present of cold cash. At first they felt something like the Dutch sabots. They seemed absolutely unbendable and so we soaked them with castor-oil. Once they become moulded to the feet they are fine. Of course they are not pretty, but they keep the wet out.

We have had new tunics issued to us of the regular English pattern, much more comfortable than our other original ones, and then instead of the hard cap we now have a soft one, something like a big golf cap with the flap on to pull down over the ears. These are much more comfortable. They have one great advantage over the old kind — we can sleep in them. We can now lie down in our complete outfits even to our hats. Once I considered it a hardship to sleep in my

clothes. Now to go to bed we don't undress; we put on clothes.

I managed to get a pass to Salisbury on Saturday and went to the local vaudeville show. In the row in front of me were several young officers of the British Army, and it was striking what a clean-cut lot they were. England is certainly giving of her best. They were not very much different from any others, but at the same time they are the type of Englishmen who have done things in the past and will do things again. They are all Kitchener's Army. Thousands of men who have never been in the army before threw up everything to go in the ranks. You see side by side professors, laborers, lawyers, doctors, stevedores, carters, all classes, rich and poor, a great democratic army, drilling to fight so that this may be a decent world to live in.

At present it is almost impossible to use each man in his own profession as they do in Germany, but sometimes the non-commissioned officers work it out in this way.

Sergeant to squad of recruits: —

"Henybody 'ere know anythink abart cars?"

"Yes; I do. I own a Rolls Royce."

"Olright; fall out and clean the major's motor bike."

One patriotic mother who had a son who was a butcher did her best to get him to join the Royal Army Medical Corps, because he was proficient at cutting up meat and would feel quite at home assisting at amputations.

Now that we are approaching the time for our departure to France we are hearing that favorite farewell to all men going to the front, "Good-bye, I'll look every day for your name in the casualty list."

The "Princess Pats" have already been in action. They had a hard fight and many of them have been put out of business. We envied them when they went away and still do, although it only seems yesterday that we were lying together here and now a number of them are lying "somewhere in France."

The jam-making firm of Tickler was awarded a huge contract for the supply of "Tommy's" daily four ounces of jam; either plum and apple were the cheapest combination or else the crop of these two fruits must have been enormous, because every single tin of jam that went to the training camps, France, Dardanelles, or Mesopotamia, was of this mixture.

We became so tired of it that we used the unopened tins to make borders of flower-beds, or we used them to make stepping-stones across puddles. Eventually the world's supply of plums and apples having been used up, the manufacturers were forced to use strawberries.

In the army all food is handled by the Army Service Corps, and as soon as they found real jam coming through they took it for their own and still forwarded on to us their reserve "plum and apple." The news got around amongst the fighting units: result — the Army Service Corps is now known as the "Strawberry Jam Pinchers."

Reviewed by King George V, and it was indeed a very impressive sight. Although there were only twenty thousand troops, they seemed endless. During the time that the King was on the parade ground in company with Lord Kitchener two aeroplanes kept guard in the sky. Our K. of K. is a big, fine man who looks the part. An inspection by the King is always a sure sign of a unit's impending departure. He traveled down on the new railway which had just been built by the defaulters of the Canadian Contingent.

At the last minute I managed to get week-end leave and went to London. No Canadians there! I caught sight of a military picket, sergeant and twelve men, looking for stray ones, though. Another picket held me up and made me button my greatcoat. I did! It is n't clever to argue with pickets at any time!

The train was three hours late. Troops' trains were occupying the lines. From Bulford we walked home in a hail-storm. Got in

about five o'clock just as the reveille was blowing in the other lines. They were just leaving for the front, and had made great fires where they were burning up rubbish and stuff they could n't take with them. Tons of it! Chairs, mattresses, and tables. When we move, everything except equipment has to be discarded. We can't do anything with extras. We have to cut our own stuff down to the very smallest dimensions. I walked through the lines afterward of other battalions who had left, and I saw fold-up bedsteads, uniforms, equipment, books, buckets, washing-bowls, cartridges and stoves of every conceivable kind and shape; hundreds, from the single "Beatrice" to the big tiled heaters. Some tents were half full of blankets thrown in, others with harness. All the government stuff is collected, but private stuff is burnt.

In the army you soon realize that you have to make yourself comfortable your own way. I don't hesitate to take anything. If I have on a pair of puttees which are a bit worn and

I find a new pair, — well, I just calmly yet cautiously annex them and discard the old ones. We found a barrel of beer had been left by one of the other units, so we carefully carried the prize to our lines and then tapped it. Zowie! It was a beer barrel all right, only it was filled with linseed oil.

Thank the Lord!! Under a roof, sitting on a real chair; tablecloth, plates; and I'm dry. We have come to Wilton (of carpet fame) and I'm in a billet. I have a real bed to sleep in. Last night I lay on the floor of a mildewed tent; could n't sleep on account of the cold. To-night I sleep between sheets, and the wonderful thing is that I'm not on leave.

We drove our cars down here, each of us hoping that we would never again see Bustard Camp, Salisbury Plain, as long as we lived; it had been our home for five months. Yesterday we felt like mutiny; to-day every one is smiling. As soon as we were "told off" Pat and I went to our billet, a nice clean little

house close to the center of the town. The owner is a baker. I felt kind of uncomfortable with my boots and clothes plastered up with mud, but the good lady said, "Don't 'e mind, come in, bless you; I 've 'ad soldiers afore. The last one 'e said as 'ow he could n't sleep it were so quiet 'ere."

I had a wash (this is Friday night), the first since Wednesday morning. The idea of having as much water as you want, without having to go a half mile over a swamp, pleased me so much that I used about six basinsful in the scullery.

When the lady of the house asked us *what* we would *like* to eat, we both fainted. I'm afraid we're going to get spoiled here. Could n't sleep at first. Cold sheets and having all my clothes off — too great a strain! Had breakfast and then drove our cars to the canal, where we scrubbed and washed them down inside and out.

This afternoon I've been into every shop I could find, chiefly to talk to people who are not soldiers. Even went into the church to

look around and listened to the parrotlike description of the place by the sexton.

Everybody is happy, and although it has rained ever since we have been here, we have n't noticed it yet. I may say there are four or five kids, and the whole house could be packed into our front room. Still, "gimme a billet any time."

I have just received the news that I have been given a Second Lieutenancy in the Motor Machine Gun Service, Royal Field Artillery, and I go into camp at Bisley at once. I am very glad that before being an officer I have been a private, because I now have the latter's point of view. I am going to try hard to be a good officer; promotion always means more work and responsibility, — so here goes.

I have been very busy lately training my new section, and we are now part of the 12th Battery, Motor Machine Guns, 17th Division British Expeditionary Force, leaving to-day for the "Great Adventure."

Crumps

Somewhere in France. At last we are here. We landed at a place the name of which I am not allowed to mention, and were then taken by a guide to a "Rest Camp" about two miles from the docks. If they had called it a garbage dump I should n't have been surprised. You would be very much surprised with the France of to-day. Everybody speaks English; smart khaki soldiers in thousands everywhere.

Already I have seen men who have been gassed and the hospitals here are full of wounded. Our troops are arriving all day and night and marching away. English money is taken here, but French is more satisfactory as you are likely to get done on the change. The officers have a mess here just as in England. Actually we are farther away from the firing line than we were in camp at Bisley; but we leave to-day on our machines going direct to it. There was a transport torpedoed just outside; they managed to beach her just in time. The upper decks and masts are sticking up above water.

Crumps

Since I last wrote anything in this diary we have ridden over one hundred and ten miles by road towards the firing line. All day yesterday it poured. The country was beautiful, ripening corn everywhere, the villages are full of old half-timbered houses, the roads are all national roads built for war purposes by Napoleon, and run straight; on either side are tall, poplar shade trees, so that the roads run through endless avenues.

At night we stayed in a quaint village inn. The men all slept in a loft over their machines. Our soaked clothes were put in the kitchen to dry, but owing to the number of them, they just warmed up by the morning. One officer has to follow in the rear of every unit to pick up the stragglers. I had to bring up the rear of the column to-day — result: I did n't get in until early in the morning, only to find the other subalterns "sawing wood."

Yesterday was the French National Day. We were cheered as we rode along, and

women and children smothered us with flowers. In the morning a funeral of two small children passed us. Our battery commander called the battery to attention and officers saluted. The priest was two days overdue with his shave — soldiers notice things like that, you know.

To-day we continued our ride; the weather was much better — dried our clothes by wearing them. Strange to run through Normandy villages and suddenly come across British Tommies — many of them speaking French. A Royal Navy car has just passed us; our navy seems omnipresent. I saw an old woman reading a letter by the side of an old farmhouse to some old people, evidently from a soldier, probably their son. It reminded me a great deal of one of Millet's pictures. Every one thinks of the war here and nothing but the war; it's not "Business as Usual."

We stay here one night and move away to-morrow. We can hear the guns faintly.

The three section officers, myself and two others, are sleeping in a hut together. It is one of these new collapsible kind, very convenient. We are now all in bed. Outside the only sound we can hear is the sentries challenging and the mosquitoes singing.

All males are soldiers in France, even the old men. They look very fine in their blue uniforms, but I have a prejudice for our khaki Tommies. We get good food as we travel, but pay war prices for it. Cherries are now in season; we don't pay for them, however.

Rode another sixty miles to-day. A car smashed into the curb, cannoned off and ran over me, busting my machine up. The front wheel went over my leg. My revolver and leather holster saved me from a fracture, but I got badly bruised up. I was very scared that I should not be able to go "up" with the Battery. It would be almost a disgrace to go back broken up by a car

without even getting a whack at the Boche. Had to ride later on another machine twenty-five miles through the night without lights, in a blinding rain.

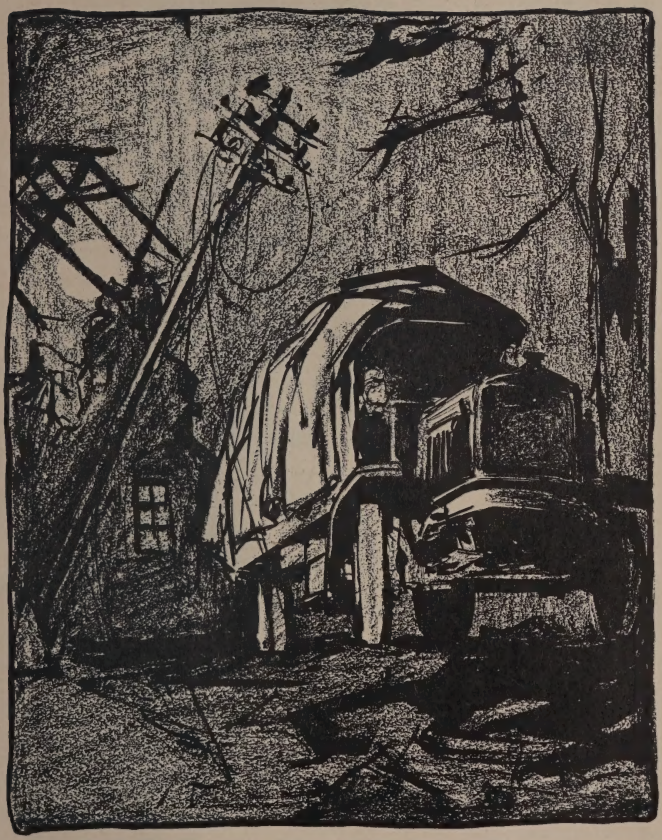
Everything interesting. Should like to have a camera with me. I had to post mine back. So many things are done in the British Army by putting a man on his honor. They just ask you to do things. They don't order you to do it. It was that way with me; they merely "asked" me to post my camera back.

Great powerful cars rush by here all day and all night, regardless of speed limits. Every hour or so you see a convoy of twenty or thirty motor lorries in line bringing up ammunition or supplies, or coming back empty. Every point bristles with sentries who demand passes. If you are not able to answer satisfactorily, they just shoot. The French soldiers have magnificent uniforms; the predominating color is a sort of cobalt blue. To see sentries, French and British

together, they make quite a nice color scheme.

Officers censor all letters. I censor sometimes fifty letters a day. One man put in a letter to-day, "I can't write anything endearing in this, as my section officer will read it." Another, "I enclose ten shillings. Very likely you will not receive this, as my officer has to censor this letter." Of course we don't have time to read all the letters through. We look for names of places and numbers of divisions, brigades, etc., but I could n't help noticing that one of my men, whom I have long suspected of being a Don Juan, had by one mail written exactly the same letter to five different girls in England, altering only the addresses and the affectionate beginnings.

The village in which I am now was visited last September by twelve German officers who came through in motor cars; the villagers cried, "Vivent les Anglais," for not having seen an English soldier they took it for granted that the "Tommy" had come.



THE LORRY

Everybody goes armed to the teeth. I have my belt, a regular Christmas tree for hanging things on, with revolver and cartridges on even while I'm writing this. We carry a lot, but we soon get used to it.

The corn is being cut now. Through the window opposite I can see it standing in newly-stacked sheaves. These places are the favorite sketching grounds of artists in normal times, and I often wonder if they ever will be again.

We return salutes with all the French and Belgian officers. It is difficult sometimes to distinguish them. I got fooled by a Belgian postman, and then went to work and cut a French general.

The nearer we get to the firing line the finer the type of soldier. They are the magnificent Britishers of Kitchener's First Army. It makes you proud to see them marching by, dirty and wet with sweat. I watched two battalions come through; they had marched twenty miles through the sun with new issue

boots; a few of them had fallen out, and other men and officers were carrying their equipment and rifles; many of the officers carried two rifles.

I am now well within sound of the guns. A German Taube was shelled as it came over our firing line yesterday. One man was lying on his back asleep with his hat over his eyes, when a piece of shrapnel from one of the "Archies" hit him in the stomach — result: one blasphemous, indignant casualty. From the road I can see one of the observation balloons, a queer sausage-shaped airship. We may be moved up into the thick of it at any time now.

I have been over into Belgium to-day: crossed the frontier on my motor bike; the roads are terrible, all this beastly "pavé" cobblestones; awful stuff to ride over on a motor cycle. Shell holes on both sides of the road, and I saw three graves in the corner of a hop garden. All along the road there were dozens and dozens of old

London motor buses, taking men to the trenches. They still have the advertisements on them and are driven by the bus-drivers themselves. Three hundred came over with their own machines. They are now soldiers. The observation balloon I mentioned yesterday was shelled down to-day.

I am writing this in an old Flemish farmhouse, and the room I'm sitting in has a carved rafter ceiling, red brick floor and nasty purple cabbage wallpaper. All the men of the house with the exception of the old man are at the war; one son has already died. The Germans have been through here. They tied the mayor of the town to a tree and shot him. The trenches have been filled in, all the wreckage cleared, and they have a new mayor.

It is not yet 7 A.M. I am an orderly officer and have to take the men out for a run at six. I came back and bought a London "Daily Mail" of yesterday from a country-woman. We are at least three miles from the town,

but they are enterprising enough to bring papers to us at this time in the morning. A "Daily Mail" costs four cents.

Since I last wrote I have been up to the front line. Everything is different from what you imagine. The German trenches are easily distinguished through glasses; their sand-bags are multi-colored. Shrapnel was bursting over ruins of an old town in their lines. When you look through a periscope at the wilderness, it is difficult to imagine that thousands of soldiers on both sides have burrowed themselves into the earth. The evidence of their alertness is shown by their snipers, who are always busy whenever the target is up.

A battery of eight-inch howitzers was opening fire. Our battery commander, hearing this, sent us up. The guns, big fellows, were well concealed. They were painted in protective colors and covered with screens of branches to prevent aerial observation. In the grounds all over the place were dug-outs, deep rabbit burrows, ten or twelve feet down,

into which everybody went immediately. The Germans started their "hate." The firing is done by hand cord; other big guns are fired electrically. An enormous flash, an ear-splitting crash, a great sheet of flame from the muzzle, and two hundred pounds of steel is sent tearing through the air to the "Kultur" exponents. The whole gun lifts off the ground and runs back on its oil-compression springs. These guns are moved by their own caterpillar tractors which are kept somewhere close by. In three quarters of an hour they can get them started on the road. The ground for these emplacements was the orchard of a chateau. While we were there a whistle blew three times, an order shouted; immediately the guns were covered up and the men took cover. The enemy had sent an aeroplane to locate them. If they could once find them, hundreds of shells would rain on this spot in a few minutes. At a few yards' distance I could n't see the guns myself. The "Hows" were firing at a house in the German lines which had been giving

trouble. In three rounds they got it and then started in to "dust" the neighborhood. Of course, the firing is indirect. The officers and men who are with the guns don't see the effects. Apparently they fire straight away in the air. The observation is done by the forward observing officer in the fire trenches who corrects them by 'phone.

After the appointed number of rounds had been fired, we adjourned to the chateau, a fine house, marble mantelpiece, plaster ceilings, gilt mirror panels, etc. It has still a few pieces of furniture left, no carpets, most of the windows are smashed; shells have visited it, but chiefly in splinters. I saw one picture on the wall with a hole drilled in by a shrapnel bullet which had gone clean through as though it had been drilled. It had n't smashed the glass otherwise. From a window of the room, which the officers use as a mess, a neat row of graves is to be seen. Outside there are great shell holes, most of them big enough to bury a horse. Suddenly a shriek and a deafening explosion

occurred in the garden. "Sixty-pound shrapnel! Evening hate," said an artillery sub. We left! We had been sent up to see the guns fire and not to be fired at.

To go home we had to pass a village completely deserted, a village that was once prosperous, where people lived and traded and only wanted to be left alone. Now grass is growing in the streets. Shops have their merchandise strewn and rotting in all directions. On one fragment of a wall a family portrait was still hanging, and a woman's undergarments. A grand piano, and a perambulator tied in a knot were trying to get down through a coal chute. To wander through a village like this one that has been smashed up, and with the knowledge that the smashing up may be continued any time, is thrilling. Churches are always hateful to the Germans. They shell them all; bits of the organs are wrapped around the tombstones, and coffins, bones and skulls are churned up into a great stew. In some of the villages a few of the inhabitants had stayed

and traded with the soldiers. They lived in cellars usually and suffered terribly. British military police direct the traffic when there is any, and are stationed at crossroads with regular beats like a city policeman.

While traveling to another part of the line we had an opportunity of seeing the "Archies" (anti-aircraft guns) working. They were mounted on lorries and fire quite good-sized shells. They fired about fifty shots at one Taube, but did n't register a bull. Later in the evening from a trench we had the satisfaction of seeing another aeroplane set on fire, burn, and drop into the German lines like a shot partridge. Aeroplanes are as common as birds. Yesterday a "Pfeil" (arrow) biplane came right over our lines and was chased off by our own machines. The enemy's aeroplanes have their iron cross painted on the underside of their wings and are more hawkish-looking than ours. They are more often used for reconnoitering and taking photographs than for dropping bombs.

Crumps

We are being moved up closer to the firing line. I have been made billeting officer. I went to headquarters; a staff colonel showed me a subdivision on a map. "Go there and select a place for your unit." The place was a wretched village of about six houses, all of which are more or less smashed about, windows repaired with sacking and pieces of wood. All of the inhabitants have moved except those who are too poor. Every square inch is utilized. I managed to get a cow-shed for the officers. It looks comfortable. On the door I could just decipher, written in chalk, by some previous billeting officer, —

2 Staff Officers
6 Officers
2 Horses

Billeting chalk marks are on almost all the shops and houses up from the coast to the front.

The field which we are expecting to put the men into belonged to a miller who lived

in a different area. We went to see him. He could n't speak English or French, so I tried him with German. While we were talking, I noticed some non-coms watching us very intently and was not surprised to find one following us back down the road. When he saw our car he came up and apologized for having taken us for spies. They are looking for two Germans in our lines wearing British uniforms, who have given several gun positions away. Two days ago the enemy shelled the road systematically on both sides for half a mile when an ammunition column was due. It was quite dark before we left; the sky was continually lit up by the star shells, very pretty white rockets, which light up No Man's Land. The enemy has a very good kind which remains alight for several minutes.

Our days of comfortable billets are over, I am afraid. Unless you are working hard, it is miserable here, — wrecked towns, bad roads, shell holes, smells, dirt, soldiers, horses, trenches. The inhabitants are a

poor, wretched lot. Many of them are thieves and spies. We are right in Belgium, where flies and smells are as varied as in the Orient.

Wherever we travel by day or night we are constantly challenged by sentries and have to produce our passes. We stopped in one darkened shell-riddled town and knocked up an *estaminet;* we got a much finer meal than you can get at many places farther back. We talked to the woman who kept it and asked her if she slept in the cellar. "Oh, no! I sleep upstairs, they never bombard except at three in the morning or nine at night. Then I go into the cellar." This woman was a very pleasant, intelligent person, most probably a spy. Intelligent people generally leave the danger zone.

Marching through the sloughed-up mud, through shell holes filled with putrid water, amongst most depressing conditions, I saw a working party returning to their billets. They were wet through and wrapped up with scarves, wool helmets, and gloves. Over

their clothes was a veneer of plastered mud. They marched along at a slow swing and in a mournful way sang —

"Left — Left — Left
We — are — the tough Guys!"

Apparently there are no more words to this song because after a pause of a few beats they commenced again —

"Left — Left — Left — "

They looked exactly what they said they were.

Windmills, of which there are a good many, are only allowed to work under observation. It was found that they were often giving the enemy information, using the position of the sails to spell out codes in the same way as in semaphore; clock-hands on church towers are also used in the same way.

I saw a pathetic sight to-day. A stretcher came by with a man painfully wounded; he was inclined to whimper; one of the stretcher-

bearers said quietly to him, "Be British." He immediately straightened himself out and asked for a "fag." He died that night.

We had a terrific bombardment last night; the ground shook all night and the sky was lit up for miles. The Boches used liquid fire on some new troops and we lost ground.

I found this piece of poetry on the wall of a smashed-up chateau, and I have copied it exactly as I found it. The writing was on a darkened wall, and while I copied it my guide held a torchlight up to it. The place passes as "Dead Cow Farm" on all official maps.

"I've traveled many journeys in my one score years and ten,
And oft enjoyed the company of jovial fellow men,
But of all the happy journeys none can compare to me
With the Red-Cross special night express from the trenches to the sea.

"It's Bailleul, Boulogne, Blighty, that's the burden of the song,
Oh, speed the train along.

Crumps

If you've only half a stomach and you have n't got
a knee,
You'll choke your groans and try to shout the chorus
after me.

Bailleul, Boulogne, and Blighty, dear old Blighty
'cross the sea.'

"Now some of us are mighty bad and some are
wounded slight,
And some will see their threescore years and some
won't last the night,
But the Red Cross train takes up the strain all in a
minor key
And sings Boulogne and Blighty as she rumbles to
the sea.

"Oh, it's better than the trenches and it's better than
the rain,
It's better than the mud and stink; we're going home
again,
Though most of us have left some of us on the wrong
side of the sea.
We are a lot of blooming cripples, but — down-
hearted? No, siree.

"There's a holy speed about this train for each of us
can see
That we will cross the shining channel that lies 'twixt
her and me
To the one and only Blighty, our Blighty, 'cross the
sea,'
Where the blooming Huns can never come, 'twixt
her and home and me."

"Blighty" is the wound which sends a man home to England; it's a war word which came originally from the Indians, but now universally adopted in the new trench language.

I was walking along a trench when a man, who was sitting on a firestep looking up into a little trench mirror (which is used by putting the end of the bayonet between the glass and the frame), just crumpled up, shot through the heart. He did n't say a word. The trench had thinned out and the bullet had come through, nearly four feet down from the top of the parapet.

Bad shell fire this afternoon. Saw shells churning things up seventy-five yards away; many passed overhead; had a ride on my motor cycle with the other officers to reconnoiter the roads leading down to the part of the trenches we have taken over; road was shelled as we came along. Two "coal boxes" hit the road and smashed up a cottage in front of us; we picked up pieces of the shell too hot to hold.

Our billet now is another large farm, with the pump in the center of the manure heap as usual; our machines are parked all round a field close to the hedges to make a smaller target and also to prevent aerial observation.

I went through a town this morning which has been on everybody's lips for months — I have never seen such devastation in my life; it baffles description. The San Francisco earthquake was a joke to this. Thousands and thousands of shells have pummeled and smashed until very little remains besides wreckage. Most of the shelling has been done to deliberately destroy the objects of architectural value.

My quarters are in a loft amongst rags, old agricultural implements, sacks, and the accumulation of years of dirt; flies wake me up at daylight.

This morning I went for a drink in the *estaminet* I have mentioned already. Two shells have been through the sides of the house since we were last there, but they both came through at the usual scheduled time.

Crumps

This poor country is pockmarked with shell craters like a great country with a skin disease. Trees have been splintered worse than any storm could do. Nothing has been spared. The mineral rights of this territory should be very valuable some day. When we have all finished salting the earth with nickel, lead, steel, copper, and aluminum, old-metal dealers will probably set up offices in No Man's Land.

Belgium will have to be rebuilt entirely, or left as it is, a monument to "Kultur."

My section has been ordered up to a divisional area on the south of the salient. In accordance with instructions I went up to Ypres this morning to find a place to park the machines.

Contrary to the popular belief, we do not fight our guns from the motor cycles themselves. We use our machines to get about on, and the guns are taken up as near as possible to the position we are to occupy, which is usually behind Brigade Headquar-

ters. Brigadiers have a great aversion to any kind of motor vehicle being driven past their headquarters, owing to the movement and noise, which they believe attracts attention to themselves, and as a rule the sentries posted outside will see that no machines go by. We get up as far as we can, because after we part from our machines, everything must be carried up through the trenches by hand.

I arrived at the town early and reported to the major who is in charge of the town and of the troops quartered there. He was living in the prison, a substantial brick and stone building, which has been smashed about a bit, but which is still a fairly good structure. The major is a fine, gruff old gentleman who was a master of fox hounds in the North of England. He came over with a detachment of cavalry. He is past the age limit, and it was decided that although he was a fine soldier, perhaps his age would be a deterrent and his job ought to be something lighter, so they gave him one of the fiercest jobs in the world — O. C. Ypres!

BRINGING UP A MOTOR MACHINE GUN

I was sent in, and when he heard my errand he said, "You want to park your machines in Ypres? Why don't you take them up in the German front lines? You'll be safer there than here. Listen to the shelling now." I knew this, but I was doing just exactly what I was told. He continued: "I have now thousands of troops here and my daily casualties are enormous, so naturally I don't want any more men. The best plan for you will be to go down the Lille road and pick a house below 'Shrapnel Corner.'"

I went on through the town, under the Lille gate, across the tram lines, past the famous cross-roads known as "Shrapnel Corner" and chummed up with some artillery officers. They told me that I could have any of the houses I wanted. I picked a couple which looked to me to be more complete than the rest and chalked them up. This whole place was alive with batteries. While I was there I heard a shout and suddenly a hidden battery of guns, sunk behind the road with the muzzles almost resting on

it, started firing across in the direction of the part of Belgium occupied by Fritz. I had passed within two feet of these guns and yet had not seen them, they were so well "camouflaged." On my way back I saw the "Big Berthas" bursting in the town, and I was surprised that so little damage had been actually done to the Lille gate itself. Shells had visited everywhere in the neighborhood, but had not smashed this old structure.

I went home, collected my men together, and told them the importance of the work we were to undertake. I have found it always a good thing to make the men think the job that they are doing is of great importance. Better results are obtained that way.

We went to an "engineer dump" on the way up just after the enemy had landed a shell on a wagon loading building material, and wounded were being carried off and the mangled horses had been dragged on one side. As the wounded came by I called my section to attention, the compliment due to wounded men paid by units drawn up.

We drew our sandbags in the usual way by requisitioning for five thousand and getting one thousand. Always ask for more than you expect to get.

As we came into Ypres, a military policeman on duty told me it was unhealthy to go the usual way through the Market Square, because the shelling was bad in that part of the town, so I spread the machines out and started on down a side street. We were getting on finely and I was congratulating myself on getting through, when two houses, hit from the back, collapsed across the street in front of my machine. Without any ceremony I turned my machine back along the street which we had come and went through the Market Square down the Lille road, under the gate, being followed by my section. About four hundred yards down I stopped; holding my solo motor cycle between my legs, standing up, I looked back. I counted my machines as they came up. If it had n't been so scary, it really would have been funny, to see these machines

coming down the road through shell holes and over piles of bricks, as fast as the drivers could make them go. The men were hanging on for dear life and the machines rocked from side to side, but they were all there.

Down the road we went to the houses; there we parked the machines and unpacked. A guard was placed over them and the rest of us marched down to the trenches.

An officer has to buy all his own equipment and is allowed two hundred and fifty dollars by the Government towards the cost. An officer carries a revolver, but all junior officers as soon as possible acquire a rifle. The men of a "salvage company" were collecting all the rifles, bayonets, and parts of equipment near where I was to-day and I managed to get a Lee-Enfield (British rifle) in good shape. I felt that I would like to have a rifle and bayonet handy. I found a good-looking bayonet sticking in the side of a sandbag wall. It looked lonely.

"WIPERS"

The scabbard I am using was resting in a loft of a deserted brewery. I am now complete with rifle, bayonet, and scabbard.

Sometimes you see a man smashed about in a terrible way, such a mess that you think he is a goner; he may recover. Another man may have just a small wound and will die. A bullet hitting a man in the head will smash it as effectually as a sledge-hammer. Once a man leaves your unit, wounded, you don't see him again. You get a fresh draft.

No one thinks of peace here. Germany must be put in a similar state to Belgium first.

We never travel anywhere without our smoke helmets; they come right over our heads and are tucked into our shirts; they have two glass eye-pieces. When we have them on we look like the old Spanish gentleman who ran the "Star Chamber." Helmets must always be ready to put on instantly. Gas is a matter of seconds in coming over. The helmets are better than respirators, but have to be constantly in-

spected. A small hole, or if one is allowed to dry, means a casualty.

Storm brewing. Flies bad, driven in by the wind. Nature goes on just the same. I suppose that this farm would be just as fly-ridden in an ordinary summer. During the bombarding yesterday I noticed swallows flying about quite unconcerned. Corn, mostly self-planted, grows right up to the trenches. Cabbages grow wild. Communicating trenches run right through fields of crops; flowers grow in profusion between the lines, big red poppies and field daisies, and there are often hundreds of little frogs in the bottom of the trenches.

A trip to No Man's Land is an excursion which you never forget. It varies in width and horrors. My impression was similar to what I should feel being on Broadway without any clothes — a naked feeling. Forty-seven and one half inches of earth are necessary to stop a bullet, and it's nice to have that amount of dirt between you and the enemy's

bullets. The dead lie out in between the lines or hang up on the wire; they don't look pretty after they have been out some time. It's a pleasant job to have to get their identification disks, and we have to search the bodies of the enemy dead for papers and even buttons so that we can know what unit is in front of us. Flowers grow in between, butterflies play together, and birds nest in the wire. When the grass becomes too high it has to be cut, because otherwise it would prevent good observation. In some places grass does n't have a chance to even take root, let alone grow. The shells take care of that.

I managed to get a translation of a diary kept by a German soldier who fell on the field. Below is an exact translation and gives the point of view of a man in the trenches on the other side of the line. He was writing his diary at the same time I was writing mine, and we were both fighting around the salient at Ypres, Hooge being on the point of the salient farthest east. This part, which was

once a place of beauty which people came long distances to see, is now like a great muddy Saragossa Sea which at the height of its fury has suddenly become frozen with the tortured limbs of trees and men, and wreckage and reeking smells, until it can again lash itself in wild fury into whirlpools. It is in all respects Purgatory, but of greater horror than Dante ever dreamt of.

Diary of F—— P—— of the 6th Company, 3d Battalion, 132d Regiment. Killed at Hooge on August 9th, 1915.

On May 10, we were told to prepare for the journey to the front. Each man received his service ammunition and two days' rations, and we then started with heavy packs on our backs and our water-bottles full of coffee. After a long march we reached our reserve position, where we were put into rest billets for two days in wooden huts hidden in a wood. We could hear from here the noise of the shells coming through the air.

On May 13, we moved into the trenches, in the night. We were a whole hour moving along a communication trench one and one-half metres deep, right up to the front line some fifty metres

from the enemy. This was to be our post. We had hardly got in before the bullets came flying over our heads. Look out for the English! They know how to shoot! I need hardly say we did not wait to return the compliment. We answered each one of their greetings and always with success, inasmuch as we stood to our loopholes for twenty-four hours with two-hour reliefs.

At length early on the 15th, at four o'clock, came our first attack. After a preliminary smoking-out with gas, our artillery got to work, and about ten o'clock we climbed out of the trenches and advanced fifty metres in the hail of bullets. Here I got my first shot through the coat. Three comrades were killed at the outset of the assault, and some twenty slightly or severely wounded, but we had obtained our object. The trench was ours, although the English twice attempted to turn us out of it.

The fight went on till eleven o'clock that evening. We were then relieved by the 10th Company, and made our way back along the communication trenches to our old positions. Here we remained until the third day, standing by at night and passing two days without sleep. We were hardly able to get our meals. From every side firing was going on, and shots came plugging two metres deep into the ground. This was my baptism of fire. It cannot be described as it really is — something like an earthquake, when

the big shells come at one and make holes in the ground large enough to hold forty or fifty men comfortably. How easy and comfortable seemed our road back to the huts.

We remained in the huts for three days, resting before we went up again to "Hell Fire," as they call the first line trenches in front of Ypres.

Then suddenly in the middle of the night an alarm. Our neighbors had allowed themselves to be driven out of our hard-won position, and the 6th Company, with the 8th and 5th, had to make good the lost ground. A hasty march through the communication trenches up to the front, the night lit up far and wide with searchlights and flares and ourselves in a long chain lying on our bellies. Towards two in the morning the Englishmen came on, 1500 men strong. The battle may be imagined. About 200 returned to the line they started from. Over 1300 dead and wounded lay on the ground. Six machine guns and a quantity of rifles and equipment were taken back by us, the 132d Regiment, and the old position was once more in our possession. What our neighbors lost the 132d regained. There was free beer that evening and a concert! At 11 P. M. once more we withdrew to the rear, our 2d, 4th and 10th Companies relieving us. We slept a whole day and night like the dead.

On June 15th, we again went back to rest billets, but towards midday we were once more sent

up to the front line to reinforce our right wing, which was attacked by French and English. Just as we got to our trenches we were greeted by a heavy shell fire, the shells falling in front of our parapets, making the sandbags totter. Seeing this, I sprang to the spot and held the whole thing together till the others hurried up to my assistance. Just as I was about to let go, I must have got my head too high above the parapet, as I got shot in the scalp. In the excitement I did not at once realize that I was wounded, until Gubbert said — "Hullo, Musch! Why, you 're bleeding!" The stretcher-bearer tied me up, and I had to go back to the dressing-station to be examined. Happily it was nothing more than a mere scalp wound, and I was only obliged to remain on the sick-list four days, having the place attended to.

June 24th. All quiet in the West, except for sniping. The weather is such that no offensive can take place. The English will never have a better excuse for inactivity than this — "It is raining." Thank God for that! Less dust to swallow to-day! Odd that here in Belgium we are delighted with the rain, while in Germany they are watching it with anxiety.

To-day we shall probably be relieved. Then we go to Menin to rest. Ten days without coming under fire. It is Paradise!

Sunday, June 27th. At nine o'clock clean up.

At eleven roll-call. At three o'clock went to the Cinema — very fine pictures. In the afternoon all the men danced till seven, but we had to take each other for partners — no girls.

July 2d. 11 P. M. Alarm. Three persons have been arrested who refused to make sandbags. They were pulled out of bed and carried off. Eight o'clock marched to drill. This lasts till 11. Then 1 to 4 rest. Six, physical drill and games. I went to the Cinema in the evening.

July 6th. Inspection till eleven. Three hours standing in the sun — enough to drive me silly. Twenty-three men fell out. Three horses also affected by the heat. Eleven to one Parade march — in the sun. Thirty-six more men reported sick. I was very nearly one of them.

July 9th. Preparation for departure. From seven to ten pack up kits. Eleven, roll-call. One-thirty, march to light railway. At seven reached firing trench. The English are firing intermittently over our heads; otherwise, all is quiet. We are now on the celebrated, much-be-written-about "Hill 60." Night passes without incident.

July 12th. At three in the morning the enemy makes a gas attack. We put on respirators. Rifle in hand we leap from the trenches and assault. In front of Hill 60 the enemy breaks, and we come into possession of a trench. Rapid digging. Counter-attack repulsed. At nine o'clock

all is quiet, only the artillery still popping. This evening we are to be relieved. The 132d Regiment is much beloved by the English! In a dug-out we found two labels. One of them had the following writing on it: "God strafe the 132d Regiment (not "God strafe England" this time). Sergeant Scott (?) Remington, Sewster Wall (?)." On the other was, "I wish the Devil would take you, you pigs."

At 7.20 Hill 60 is bombarded by artillery, and shakes thirty to fifty metres, as if from an earthquake. Two English companies blown into the air — a terrible picture. Dug-outs, arms, equipment — all blown to bits.

July 17th. Marched to new quarters. We have got a new captain. He wants to see the company, so at 8 A. M. drill in pouring rain. Four times we have to lie on our belly, and get wet through and through. All the men grumbling and cursing. At eleven we are dismissed. I, with a bad cold and a headache. I wish this soldiering were all over.

July 19th. At seven sharp we marched off to our position. Heavy bombardment. At nine we were buried by a shell. I know no more. At eleven I found myself lying in the Field Hospital. I have pains inside me over my lungs; and headache, and burning in the joints.

July 20th. The M.O. has had a look at me. He says my stomach and left lung are suffering

from the pressure which was put on them. The principal remedy is rest.

July 21st. Thirty-nine degrees of fever (temp. 100° Fahr.). Stay in bed and sleep, and oh! how tired I am!

July 22d. I slept all day. Had milk and white bread to eat.

July 26th. Returned to duty with three days' exemption, i. e., we do not have any outdoor work.

July 28th and 29th. Still on exemption. Nothing to do but sleep and think of home and of my dear wife and daughter. But dreaming does not bring peace any sooner. How I would love an hour or two back home.

July 31st. In rest. Baths going. Duke of Württemberg passed through our camp.

August 1st. Up to the trenches. Shrapnel flying like flies. A heavy bombardment; bombardment of Hooge. Second Battalion, 132d Regiment, sent up to reinforce 126th Regiment, which has already lost half its men.

August 4th. Heavy artillery fire the whole night. The English are concentrating 50,000 Indians on our front to attack Hooge and Hill 60. Just let them come, we shall stand firm. At three marched off to the front. Watch beginning again. Five o'clock marched off to the Witches' Cauldron, Hooge. A terrible night again. H.E. and shrapnel without number. Oh,

thrice-cursed Hooge! In one hour eleven killed and twenty-three wounded and the fire unceasing. It is enough to drive one mad, and we have to spend three days and three nights more. It is worse than an earthquake, and any one who has not experienced it can have no idea what it is like. The English fired a mine, a hole fifteen metres deep and fifty to sixty broad, and this "cauldron" has to be occupied at night. At present it is n't too badly shelled. At every shot the dug-outs sway to and fro like a weather-cock. This life we have to stick to for months. One needs nerves of steel and iron. Now I must crawl into our hole, as trunks and branches of trees fly in our trench like spray.

August 6th. To-night moved to the crater again, half running and half crawling. At seven a sudden burst of fire from the whole of the artillery. From about eleven yesterday fires as if possessed. This morning at four we fall back. We find the 126th have no communication with the rear, as the communication trenches have been completely blown in. The smoke and thirst are enough to drive one mad. Our cooker does n't come up. The 126th gives us bread and coffee from the little they have. If only it would stop! We get direct hits one after another and lie in a sort of dead end, cut off from all communication. If only it were night. What a feeling to be thinking every second when I shall get it! —— has

just fallen, the third man in our platoon. Since eight the fire has been unceasing; the earth shakes and we with it. Will God ever bring us out of this fire? I have said the Lord's Prayer and am resigned.

. . . . . .

To-day I saw the "Mound of Death" at Saint-Eloi; it has been mined a number of times, and thousands of shells have beaten it into a disorderly heap of earth; the trenches are twenty-five yards apart; all the grass and vegetation has been blown away and never has had time to grow up again.

It's all arranged for you, if there's a bit of shell or a bullet with your name on it you'll get it, so you've nothing to worry about. You are a soldier — then be one. This is the philosophy of the trenches.

War is a great ager. Young men grow old quickly here. It can be seen in their faces; they have lost all the irresponsibility of youth. I have met many men who have been here since Mons; they all look weary and

WHAT'S THE USE?

worn out by the strain. Now new troops are coming forward and it is hoped that they will be able to send some back for a rest.

Several days ago the adjutant of the Tenth Battalion Sherwood Foresters came to me with this message which was sent through our lines: —

> Arrest Officer Royal Engineers with orderly. Former, six feet, black moustache, web equipment, revolver. Latter, short, carries rifle, canvas bandolier. Please warn transports and all concerned.

Everybody kept a good lookout for these spies. One sentry surprised a real R.E. officer named Perkins who was working out a drainage scheme. Seeming to answer the above description, he stalked him, — "Come 'ere, you ——— ———, you 're the ——— I've been looking for." The officer, nonplussed, commenced to stutter. "Sergeant, I've got 'im and he can't speak a word of English." The sergeant collected him in and guarded him until another engineer officer, known to the guard, came along. As soon as Perkins

saw him, he said, "F-r-r-ed, t-t-tell this d-d-damn fool wh-ho I am." "Who the hell are you calling Fred? I don't know him; hold him, sergeant, he's a desperate one." Scarcely able to contain his joy, Fred went back to the Engineers' Camp to tell the great news and Perkins spent three hours in the sandbag dugout listening to a description of what the sergeant and his guard would do to him if they only had their way.

The real spies, who did a great deal of damage, were finally rounded up and shot in a listening post trying to regain their own lines.

Enemy snipers give us a great deal of trouble. It is very difficult to locate them. One of our men tried out an original scheme. He put an empty biscuit tin on the parapet. Immediately the sniper put a bullet through it. Now thought the Genius, "If I look through the two holes it will give me my direction," — so getting up on the fire-

step he looked through, only to roll over with the top of his head smashed off by a bullet. The sniper was shooting his initials on the tin.

We are all used to dead bodies or pieces of men, so much so that we are not troubled by the sight of them. There was a right hand sticking out of the trench in the position of a man trying to shake hands with you, and as the men filed out they would often grip it and say, "So long, old top, we'll be back again soon." One man had the misfortune to be buried in such a way that the bald part of the head showed. It had been there a long time and was sun-dried. Tommy used him to strike his matches on. A corpse in a trench is quite a feature, and is looked for when the men come back again to the same trench.

We live mostly on bully beef and hard tack. The first is corned beef and the second is a kind of dog biscuit. We always wondered why they were so particular about a

man's teeth in the army. Now I know. It's on account of these biscuits. The chief ingredient is, I think, cement, and they taste that way too. To break them it is necessary to use the handle of your entrenching tool or a stone. We have fried, baked, mashed, boiled, toasted, roasted, poached, hashed, devilled them alone and together with bully beef, and we have still to find a way of making them into interesting food.

However, the Boche likes our beef. He prefers the brand canned in Chicago to his own, and will almost sit up and beg if we throw some over to him. The method is as follows: Throw one over . . . sounds of shuffling and getting out of the way are heard in the enemy trench. Fritz thinks it's going to go off. Pause, and throw another. Fritz not so suspicious this time. Keep on throwing until happy voices from enemy trenches shout, "More! Give us more!" Then lob over as many hand grenades as you can pile into that part of the trench and tell them to share those too.

Crumps

It takes some time to distinguish whether shells are arrivals or departures, but after a while you get into the way of telling their direction and size by sound. Roads are constantly shelled, searching for troops or supply columns. I was coming home to-day, up a road which ran approximately at right angles to main fire trenches. At one place the road was exposed for a matter of thirty or forty feet, and again farther up it was necessary to go over the brow of a small hill. This was about three hundred yards farther on and was exposed to the enemy's view. Thinking they would n't bother about a single rider on a motor cycle, I went up past the first exposed position. My carburetor was giving me some trouble and I thought I would see if any rain had got into it, so I turned off the road down a cross-road and dismounted when *crash!* a shell landed right in the middle of the road as far up the exposed place as I was round the corner. Then five more followed the first shell. Had I gone on I could not possibly have missed collecting

most of the fragments. The German gunners had spotted me in the first position and decided that a lone man on a motor cycle must be either an officer or despatch rider. So they tried to get him. The shells were shrapnel and the time was calculated splendidly. They had taken into consideration the speed of my motor cycle. Cross-roads are particularly attended to, for there is a double chance of hitting something, and in consequence it is always unhealthy to linger on a cross-road.

Dugouts are often made very comfortable with windows, tiled floors and furniture taken from neighboring shattered chateaux. I have even seen them with flowers growing in window-boxes over the entrance. They all have names. Some I saw yesterday were called "Anti-Krupp Cottage," "Pleasant View," and "Little Grey Home in the West." There was one very homey site, well equipped and fitted, which had been dubbed the "Nut," — the colonel lived there.

My old corps brought an aeroplane down with a machine gun last night. They were in a shell hole between the main and support trenches.

For the last few days I have been "up" looking for gun positions.

The lice are getting to be a torment. You have no idea how bad they are. Everybody up here is infested with them. I have tried smearing myself with kerosene, but that does not seem to trouble them at all. Silk underwear is supposed to keep them down. I suppose their feet slip on the shiny surface.

The food lately has taken on a wonderful flavor and I now know how dissolved German tastes. The cook, instead of sending back two miles for water to cook with, has been using water from the moat in which a Boche had been slowly disintegrating.

To-day I was able to see what a German seventeen-inch shell could do; one had made a crater fifty feet across and twenty feet deep in the middle of the road. The top of the road was paved — think it over — and

pieces kill at a thousand yards. Thirty horses were buried in another hole.

I have been given a special job by the general to enfilade a wood over the Mound. I have my section now in the second-line trenches waiting till it is dark before making a move. We have to make a machine-gun emplacement in a piece of ground which is decidedly unhealthy to visit during daylight. I have been there in daylight, but I had to creep out of it. On the map it is called a farm, but the highest wall is only three feet six inches high.

Arrived home about two o'clock this morning. We crawled to the place we have to take up, and I put some men filling sandbags in the ruins and others even digging a dugout. The enemy had "the wind up" and were using a great number of star shells. When one goes up we all "freeze," remain motionless, or lie still. They send them up to see across their front, and if they locate a work-

ing party, then they start playing a tune with their machine guns. Bullets and shells whistled through the trees all the time. They seemed to come from all directions. The men did n't like it at all. I was n't altogether comfortable myself, but an officer must keep going. I walked about and joked and laughed with them. The range-taker said, "Some of us are getting the didley-i-dums, Sir." I don't know what that is, but I had a feeling that I had them too.

Of course, to start with, everybody thinks every single shell and bullet is coming straight for him. Then you find out how much space there is around you. One man came to tell me that two men were firing at him with his own rifle from the ruins of the alleged farmhouse, ten yards away from the dugout we are making. Just then a field mouse squeaked, and he jumped up in the air and said, "There's another." I told the men to fill sandbags from the ruins; they all crowded behind this three-foot-six wall for protection; they dug up a French

needle bayonet — that was all right, but they afterwards dug up a rifle and I noticed a suspicious smell, so I moved them.

We came home very tired. We are attacking Hooge, a counter-attack, to take back trenches lost in the liquid fire attack — you will hear what we did from the papers, probably in three months' time.

I'm writing this in a new home, this time a splinter-proof dugout. The Huns are again strafing us — last shell burst fifty yards away a few minutes ago. Several times since I started writing I have had to shake off the dust and debris thrown by shell bursts on to these pages. I was again sniped at with shrapnel this morning on my machine while reconnoitering the roads — they all missed, but they're not nice. I'm filthy, alive, and covered with huge mosquito bites; you get sort of used to the incessant din in time. Even the forty-two centimeter shells, which make a row like freight trains with loose couplings going through the air, are not so terrible now.

Crumps

Through a hole in my dugout I can see the Huns' shells Kulturing a chateau. It was once a very beautiful place with a moat, bridges, and splendid gardens. Now it's useless except that the timber and the furniture come in useful for our dugouts and the making of "duck walks," the grated walks which line the bottom of the trenches.

Last night I was sitting in the Medical Officer's dugout when a man I knew came in. He was an officer in the Second Gordons. "I feel pretty bad, doc." He explained his symptoms. "Trench fever; you go down the line." "No, fix me up for to-night and maybe I won't need anything else." He didn't! All that is left of him is being buried now, less than a hundred yards from where I write this.

Before I came here I had to go to another part of the line, in which the "Princess Pats" distinguished themselves. We have been hanging on ever since, and a mighty stiff proposition it is. The O.C. to-day told me

that he had not slept for fifty-six hours. The Germans in one place are only twenty-five yards away — so close that conversation is carried on in a whisper.

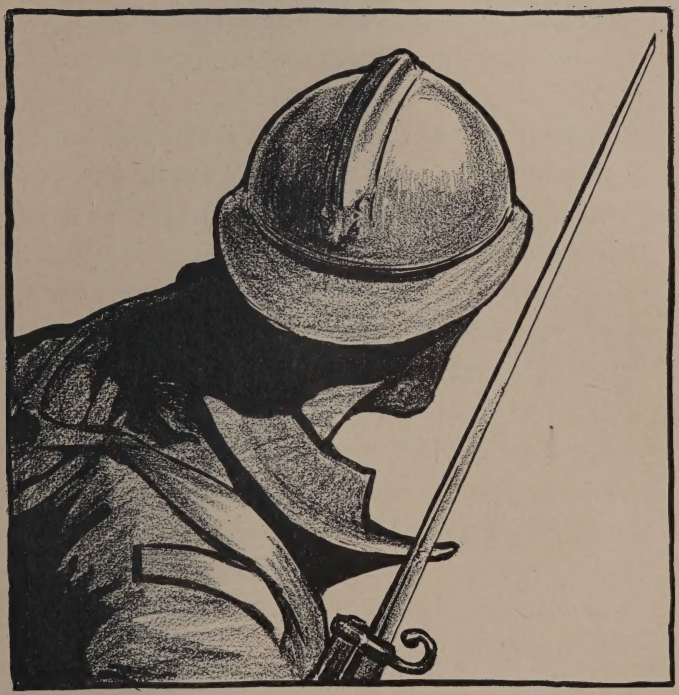
In one place they had stuck up a board with "Warsaw Captured" on it.

My section worked until two o'clock and then the sandbags gave out, so we had to come home. This was a disappointment to me. I wanted to get the job finished. My men went on filling sandbags from the same place last night and discovered the remains of the late owner of the sword bayonet. He has now been decently buried, with a little wooden cross marked —

TO AN UNKNOWN FRENCH SOLDIER

R.I.P.

When you read in the newspapers, that a trench was lost or taken, just think what it means. Think what happens to the men in the trenches; that's the part of it we see. Stretchers pass by all day. Since I have been here the cemetery has grown — a new



A FRENCH SOLDIER

mound — a simple wooden cross. Nobody talks about it, but everybody wonders who's next. The men here are splendid, the best in the world, and the officers are gentlemen.

We have moved to the famous Langhof Chateau on the Lille road. This is supposed to have belonged to Hennessey of "Three Star" fame, but the Germans had been through the wine cellars. We looked very, very carefully, but only found empties. My batman has made me comfortable. I'm writing this on a washstand; in front of me I have a bunch of roses in a broken vase. My trench coat is hanging on a nail from a coat-hanger. A large piece of broken wardrobe mirror has been nailed up to a beam for my use. One of the men just came in to ask if a trousers press would be of any use. We have a fine little bureau cupboard of carved oak; we use this for the rations. A pump, repaired with the leather from a German helmet, has been persuaded to work and has been busy ever since. The roof of my cellar is arched

brick and has a few tons of fallen debris on the floor upstairs. That strengthens it. It is shored up from inside with rafters. This makes the roof shell-proof, except for big shells, and the enemy always use big shells. The cellar floors are concrete.

It is very strange the lightness with which serious things are taken by men here, and it took me some time to understand it. I met a young captain of the Royal Marine Artillery who was in charge of a battery of trench mortars. He was telling me of how one of his mortars and the crew were wiped out by a direct hit. He referred to it as though he had just missed his train.

Two days later I went up with the Machine-Gun Officer of the Second Gordons to look at a piece of ground. To get there we had to crawl on our hands and knees. In one part of our journey we came to a sunken road. The day was fine, so we lay there. He asked me about Canada. He wanted to know something about the settler's grant. He said: "Of course you

know after a chap has been out here in the open, it will be impossible to go back again to office life." I boosted Canada and suddenly the irony of the situation occurred to me. Here we were lying down in a road quite close to the German lines, so close that it would be suicide to even stand up, and yet here we were calmly discussing the merits of Canadian emigration. I commented on this and he replied: "My dear fellow, when you have been out as long as I have, you will come to realize that being at the front is a period of intense boredom punctuated by periods of intense fear, and that if you allow yourself to be carried away by depression it will be your finish." He had been out since just after Mons.

I remembered this and I found that the nonchalant and care-free attitude of the average British officer was really a mask and simulated to keep his mind off the whole beastly business: this great big dirty job which white people must do.

Crumps

I was sitting one afternoon by the side of the canal bank about two hundred yards in front of my chateau having tea with the officers of the East Yorks when suddenly the chateau-smashing started again. To go back was dangerous and useless. My men were under cover, resting, so that they would be ready for the night work. The shelling was intermittent. One shell went over and presently I heard *crack*, — *crack*, — *boom*, *crack*, *crack*, — *crack;* my heart was in my boots and I was unable to move.

The colonel listened for a few seconds, then said: "Keene, do you know what that is?" I lied: "No, sir." I thought it was the explosion of my machine-gun bullets in their web belts and I dreaded to go up to see my section. I had worked with them and tried hard to be a good officer and the feeling that I should probably only find their mangled remains sickened me. The colonel said: "That's the 'Archie' in Bedford House. I think the last 'crump' got it. You two" — indicating myself and another officer — "go

up and see if we can do anything. See if they want a working party and let me know."

We started to run. On the way up I looked into the cellars to see the men whom I, the minute previously, had mourned for, and found two asleep, three hunting through their shirts, and the rest breaking the army orders by "shooting craps." From Bedford House a long trail of smoke was rising and the explosions became louder. We suddenly discovered the "Archie" in flames. It was in the courtyard and for camouflage had been covered with branches. It was mounted on an armored Pierce-Arrow truck. The "crump" had hit it, and gasoline, paint, branches, and hubs were supplying the fuel which was cooking out the ammunition, the *crack*, *crack*, being the report of single shells, whereas one loud *boom* signified the explosion of an entire box. These shells were going off in all directions and it became dangerous to stay too near.

The flames on the car were of pretty colors.

It is surprising the amount of inflammable material there is on a car. The late owner of the car, a lieutenant in the Royal Marine Artillery, was cursing in a low, but emphatic, marine manner, and several other officers from nearby batteries were attracted by the noise and the pyrotechnic display. I spoke to the lieutenant and sympathized with him, and he retorted: "Gott strafe Germany. Why they should hit the 'bus' when I have a brand-new pair of trench boots that I had never worn, I dunno." Just then and there the case cooked out and a piece of shell cut between us and buried itself deep in the support of a dugout, so we got under cover.

In the group was a splendid type of army chaplain. He came over almost at the start of the war and had seen a great deal of the open warfare at the commencement of hostilities. He said: "My friend Fritz is not through; he'll try to do some more yet." As the smoke died down and the cracking stopped, the enemy decided that an attempt would be made either to carry out salvage

"WHIZ–BANGS"

of whatever they had hit or else we would try to get the wounded away. So without any preliminary warning the whole area was covered by a battery fire of *whiz bangs*, and the shrapnel bullets came down like rain, several men being hit. The fire eventually died down and the wreck was allowed to cool off. The "Archies" are used so much to keep the aeroplanes up, and next to the loss of his boots the officer in charge was worried by the fact that the enemy would send an aeroplane over to see what they had hit. It was very necessary to keep the planes away, because at this time there were one hundred and fourteen batteries of artillery in the neighborhood.

Later on the battery commander came down, and as he looked at the red-hot armor plates he said: "Five thousand pounds gone up in smoke. Sorry I missed the fireworks." The Divisional general called him up at the dugout and gave him areas for the distribution of the four anti-aircraft guns and cars comprising his battery. After he was through

the commander replied: "Very good, sir, that will be done with all the guns except the third gun." The voice over the wire became very dignified, a preliminary to becoming sulphuric. "What do you mean, all but the third gun?" "Because, sir, the enemy has just 'crumped' the third gun and all that remains of it is scrap iron."

One of the battalions has a fine victrola in the officers' mess dugout with a good selection of records. I have heard Caruso accompanied on the outside by an orchestra of guns. It was a wonderful mixture. Speaking of canned music reminds me we have a small portable trench machine, which closes up like a valise, easily handled and carried about. One man near had a box full of needles distributed in his back by a bomb; he considers himself disgraced; he says it will be kind of foolish in years to come to show his grandchildren twenty-five or thirty needles and tell them that they were the cause of his wounds.

The Tommies play mouth organs a great

deal and it is much easier to march to the sound of one, even

'Ere we are; 'ere we are,
'Ere we are agin.
We beat 'em on the Marne,
We beat 'em on the Aisne,
We gave 'em 'ELL at Neuve Chapelle,
And 'ere we are agin —

sounds well with the addition of a little music.

Anything is used for trench work; often if we waited for the proper materials we should be uncomfortable, so it is one of the qualifications of a good soldier to find things. Sometimes we steal material belonging to other units, then stick around until the owners come back and help them look for them; however, it is always advisable to steal materials from juniors in rank; if they find it out, and are senior, then you are in for a one-sided strafe.

One of the other battery subalterns found a deserted carpenter's shop and he let his men loose to dismantle it. They took the parts of steel machines and used them for

the construction of a dugout. One man said, "It's like coming home drunk and smashing up the grand piano with an axe." They must have attracted the attention of the ever-alert Boche, for no sooner had they moved out than the place was shelled to the ground. Everything I now look at with an eye to its value for trench construction; thus, telegraph poles, doors, iron girders, and rails are more valuable to us out here than a Rolls Royce.

Slang or trench language is used universally. My own general talks about "Wipers," the Tommy's pronunciation of Ypres, and I have seen a reference to "Granny" (the fifteen-inch howitzer) in orders "mother" is the name given to the twelve-inch howitzer. The trench language is changing so quickly that I think the staff in the rear are unable to keep up to date, because they have recently issued an order to the effect that slang must not be used in official correspondence. Now instead of reporting that

THE "CRUMP"

a "dud Minnie" arrived over back of "mud lane," it is necessary to put, "I have the honor to report that a projectile from a German Minnenwerfer landed in rear of Trench F 26 and failed to explode."

Sometimes names of shells go through several changes. For example, high explosives in the early part of the war were called "black Marias," that being the slang name for the English police patrol wagon. Then they were called "Jack Johnsons," then "coal boxes," and finally they were christened "crumps" on account of the sound they make, a sort of *cru-ump!* noise as they explode. "Rum jar" is the trench mortar. "Sausage" is the slow-going aerial torpedo, a beastly thing about six feet long with fins like a torpedo. It has two hundred and ten pounds of high explosive and makes a terrible hole. "Whiz bang" is shrapnel.

Shelling is continuous. We have thousands of pieces of shells and fuse caps about the premises. I have in front of me a fragment of a shell about fourteen inches long and

about four and one-half inches across, which came from a German gun. The edges are so sharp that it cuts your hand to hold it. I use it as a paper-weight.

This morning I experienced a wonderful surprise. I had gone up to one of the North Stafford Batteries to borrow a clinometer. The major, while he was getting the instrument for me, casually remarked: "There's yesterday's 'Times' on the bench if you care to look at it." I turned first to the casualty list and later to the "London Gazette" for the promotions, and wholly by accident perused carefully the Motor Machine Gun Service list and there noted the announcement, "Keene, Louis, 2d Lieut., to be 1st Lieut.," and for a fact this was the "official" intimation that I had been promoted. I had a couple of spare "pips", rank stars, in my pocket-book, so I got my corporal to sew them on right away.

We are all very happy at times, very dirty, and covered with stings and bites; have no

idea how long we are to remain up. Getting used to the shell fire, and can sleep through it if it's not too close. When it comes near it makes you very thoughtful. Still working at night and resting during the day. Made another emplacement for one of my machine guns last night; had twenty men digging; surprising how fast men dig when the bullets are flying.

It's about 2 A.M. We have just come in. My new emplacement is splendid; we've made it shell-proof and have it ready for firing. I was coming home this afternoon after having been to the fire trenches when I heard a shout: "Keene!" I looked up on the canal bank and I saw the general with one of his A.D.C.'s sitting watching an aeroplane duel. "I've come up to see your gun position, Keene." I saluted, waited for him, and took him to it. It is below the level of the ground under tons of bricks in the ruins of a farmhouse. He was standing on the roof of it and said, "Well, where's the

emplacement?" "You're standing on it, sir." "Tut, tut, 'pon my word, that's good." He was delighted and congratulated me on it. My preliminary work under the eyes of the general has gone off quite well. I start firing to-night.

Intimacy between generals and lieutenants is unusual, but it looks as if mine had taken an interest in me, because when he noticed my insect-bitten face, he sent me down some dope he had used with good effect in India. I expect the mosquitoes in India were the ordinary kind, but, believe me, trench "skeeters" are constructed differently and are proof against the general's pet concoction.

I have several miners in my section who take a personal pride in the digging and shoring up of dugouts. So far the other two sections of the Battery are always behind in this work but they may look better on parade.

The canal has one big lock suitable for swimming; a lot of "jocks" were bathing there to-day. I ordered a bathing parade

for my section. Later I found that the swimming had livened three Germans, long submerged — the bathing parade is off.

A Belgian battery commander has just wakened up and his shells are rattling overhead. From the fire trenches an incessant rattle of rifles is heard; all the bullets seem to come over here; constantly the whine of a musical ricochet bullet is heard. Otherwise things are dead quiet. It's getting on for three, so I'm going to bed in my blankets on one of the late chateau owner's splendid spring mattresses and carved oak bedstead. Oh! how nice it would be to sleep without lice. From an adjoining cellar my section are snoring, and I'm going to add to the chorus. Good-night, everybody.

We have been having Sunday "hate." Eight-inch crumps are once more busting "up" the chateau. How they must detest this place. My tea and bully beef are covered with dust of the last shell. You have no idea how terrible the shell-fire is.

Crumps

First you hear the whistle and then a terrific burst which shakes the ground for a hundred yards around; when it clears away you find a hole ten feet across and six feet deep. At least fifteen have dropped around us in the last half hour.

This place is n't somewhere in France, it's somewhere in Hell! It has been the scene of a great many encounters; decayed French uniforms, old rifles, ammunition and leather equipment and bundles of mildewed tobacco leaves are strewn all over the place. I found the chin-strap of a German "Pickelhaube" in the grounds, the helmet of a French cuirassier, and the red pants of a Zouave, close together. When digging in the trenches or anywhere near the firing line you have to be careful: corpses, dead horses, and cattle are buried everywhere. I'm building a trench to my emplacement and we have a stinking cow in the direct line; this will have to be buried before we can cut through.

Everybody is cheerful and going strong.

Yesterday some of my men went swimming in the moat of the chateau; a shell dropped in the water near them, and threw up a lot of fish on to the bank. That kind of discouraged the Tommies swimming, so they cooked the fish and decided that safety comes before cleanliness out here.

It's hot and sticky, and when you have to wear thick clothes and equipment it makes you very uncomfortable, but it's all in the game.

All through the night we fired single shots from a machine gun; my orders were to fire between half-past eight at night and four o'clock in the morning. We have a number of guns doing this. It harasses the enemy and keeps them from sleeping; anything that will wear a man down is practiced here.

I've constructed a fire emplacement amongst the ruins underground; to get to it you have to travel through a tunnel eighteen feet long; inside it's very damp. I was working with my corporal, crouched up;

we were both wet and cold, and so to cheer things up every now and again we let off a few rounds and warmed our hands on the barrel. Outside it poured with rain, and mosquitoes sought refuge inside and mealed off me. The corporal was immune. I had a water bottle full of whiskey and water. We used it to keep out the cold, but it was n't strong enough. In a case like that you need wood alcohol. I would like to have had some Prohibitionists with me here. We had no light except the flash of the gun and the enemy star shells.

At daybreak I came home dead beat. I got into my cellar, was so tired that I threw myself down on the bed and wrapped myself up in my blankets, boots, mud, lice and all. I had n't been asleep long before the Huns started "hating" the chateau. They have put over twenty-five large calibre shells into my place, the grounds and the house. They are still at it. Every time a shell bursts it makes a hole big enough to bury five horses, and it shakes the foundations all round. The

shells are bigger than usual. The smoke and earth are blown up fifty or sixty feet in the air. The effect is a moral disruption. *Why can't they keep that cotton out of Germany?*

I have divided my section up into two teams, one in the cellars and one in the gun-pits. I relieve them every twenty-four hours, and I practically have to be in both places at once, but I have got a telephone in between the two places. I have it by my bed so that I can constantly know how things are going. However, the wire is cut two or three times a day by bullets and shell splinters, my linesman has a constant job.

Fired all night; came back at six o'clock this morning, very tired. Had a telegram from the general to fire two thousand rounds in twenty-four hours; this is quite hard work. Actually we could fire the lot in five minutes, but it would attract too much attention. The enemy use whole batteries of artillery to blot out machine guns which attract attention, so we have to fire single shots.

Crumps

We have for neighbors four dead cows and an unexploded six-inch shell, liable to go off any time, all in a radius of one hundred yards. We have smashed holes through five walls so that we can go through the ruins unobserved. In one place we pass over a dead cow, and in another we wade through several tons of rotten potatoes, and I believe we have a corpse handy; and part of our trench goes through another heap of rotten mangles. I'm an authority on smells. I can almost tell the nationality of a corpse now by the smell. It will soon be necessary to wear our smoke-helmets to go into the emplacement. I don't think that I have told you that I cross the Yser canal about six times a day. I'd been up a week before I knew what it was. Now it only has a few feet of water in it, the rest being held in the German locks. The part I cross over is full of bulrushes, and is the home of moor-hens, water rats, mosquitoes and frogs.

On one side of the canal is a bank which is in great demand by the machine gunners, who

are able to get a certain amount of height and observation of their fire. The general has ordered a field gun to take up a position on this bank. He refers to it as his "Sniping eighteen-pounder." It is firing at seven hundred yards right at the German line and smashes up their parapet in a style that is pretty to watch. The machine gunners are in a great state, because the enemy will soon be "searching" with his artillery for the eighteen-pounder and the lairs of the smaller hidden guns will suffer.

The men are hunting for lice in their underwear. This is the kind of conversation that is coming through from the next cellars: "I've got you beat — that's forty-seven." "Wait a minute" — a sound of tearing cloth — "but look at this lot, mother and young." "With my forty and these you'll have to find some more." They were betting on the number they could find. I peel off my shirt myself and burn them off with a candle. I glory in the little pop they make when the heat gets to them. All the insect powder

in the world has been tried out on them and they've won.

All sentries here are doubled; one thing it's safer, and another it's company; even when things are quiet, rats and mice scamper about and it sets your nerves on end. Things which are inanimate during the day become alive at night. Trees seem to walk about. I wonder what it tastes like to have a real meal in which tinned food does not figure; fancy a tablecloth; my tablecloth is a double sheet of newspaper, and even then I can't have a new one every day.

Had a good night's rest; came in about twelve o'clock and slept until eight-thirty this morning. One eye is completely closed up by a sting.

A German aeroplane has been hovering over our positions looking for my gun, so we have stopped firing and all movement. I know just how the chicken feels when the hawk hovers over it. Few people realize how much aeroplanes figure in this war,

for war would be much different without them. They do the work of Cavalry only in the sky. Whenever they come over, the sentries blow three blasts on their whistles and everybody runs for cover or freezes; guns stop firing and are covered up with branches made on frames. If men are caught in the open they stand perfectly still and do not look up, for on the aeroplane photographs faces at certain heights show light; dugouts are covered over with trees, straw or grass. We use aeroplane photographs a great deal; they show trenches distinctly and look very like the canals on Mars.

The Huns have been "hating" the road one quarter of a mile away all the morning. That does n't worry us a bit as long as they don't come any closer. I'm willing always to share up on the shelling.

This order has just been issued. It speaks for itself: —

All ranks are warned that bombs and grenades must not be used for fishing and killing game.

Crumps

I went over another farm to-day. It is one of the well-ventilated kind, punched full of holes. In the kitchen, stables and outhouses there was a most wonderful collection of junk: ammunition, British and French bandoliers, old sheepskin coats abandoned by the British troops from last winter, smashed rifles, bayonets, meat tins, parts of broken equipment, sandbags, stacks of rotten potatoes and three dead cows. The fruit trees are laden with fruit, and vines are growing up the houses with their bunches of green grapes.

In the garden several lonely graves are piled high with old boots, straw, American agricultural implements, rotting sacks and rubbish of every description, pieces of shells, barrels, and in one room the rusty remains of a perambulator and sewing machine; rats are the only inhabitants now. In the garret (the staircase leading up to it gone long ago) I found a British rifle, bayonet fixed, ten rounds in the magazine, and the bolt partly drawn out. Evidently the owner was in the

act of reloading his chamber when something happened. The graves were dated second and third months of this year. The poor wooden crosses were made of pieces of ration cases and the names written with an indelible pencil. The wretchedness of this farm, which was flourishing only a short time ago, is very pathetic.

We have adopted an old Belgian mother cat with her family of three kittens in the dugout. Now we find that three more little wild kittens are living in the bricks which we have piled around the windows to protect us against shells. They are all encouraged to live with us in the cellars. I like cats, and they will help to keep the rats down. Although some of the rats are nearly the size of cats.

It has been raining again and the trenches are filling up with slush. We carry a big trench stick, a thick sapling about four feet long with a ferrule made from a cartridge of a "very-light" (star shell), to help ourselves in walking; our feet are beginning to get

wet and cold as a regular thing now, and we are revetting our trenches firm and solid for the winter. Eleven P. M. A mine under the Boche line has just been exploded. The fighting has just started for the crater.

I took a German Uhlan helmet from a gentleman who had no further use for it. It was pretty badly knocked about; still, if I can get it home it's a trophy.

It's about eight o'clock Sunday evening. All day long shells have been coming over like locomotives. Every five seconds one goes over into the old town; every five seconds for the last two hours. The chateau has been shelled again with "crumps"; they are such rotten shots; if only they would put in two good ones in the center it would blow it to bits and then they might leave us alone. The whole of the ground is pitted because they can't hit it squarely.

My work lies behind the front line and in front of the support, firing over the heads of

MR. TOMMY ATKINS

the men in the main trenches. The emplacement was shelled to-day; one shell hit the roof, burst and knocked over one of my men, cutting his head open. He is not very badly hurt, but has gone to the hospital. The shelling has been terrible to-day.

The Germans have been very quiet lately, and working parties are out all along their front lines at night — something's up. Dirty work can be expected at any time now. We have steel helmets to protect us from spent bullets and splinters. They look like the old Tudor steel helmets and they are fine to wash in.

You have no idea what a big part food plays in our life. Yesterday morning I went with the machine-gun officer of another outfit to crawl about looking for positions. We were in an orchard. I happened to look up and saw ripe PLUMS! Terrified lest he should see them and forestall me, I said, "Let's beat it, this is too unhealthy," so we crawled back. Last night in the light of a big moon such as coons always steal watermelons by,

a section officer and his cook crawled to the plum tree. The section officer, being large, stood underneath while the cook climbed the tree and dropped them into a sandbag held open by the S.O. They got about ten pounds. They go well stewed, believe me. The fact that bullets whistled through the trees most of the time made them taste better to-day. Sat the rest of the night in a hedge firing at the Boches with a Lewis gun. I struck for bed just as dawn broke.

To-day the guns are again "hating" the chateau, and they have put sixty shells in the neighborhood. Still, "there's no cloud without a silver lining." I've got a new way home. Instead of going right around the kennels, stables, and through the yards, I go "through" the greenhouse direct, thereby saving a lot of time. The Huns' calendar is wrong. They have always shelled me Sunday and Wednesday. To-day 's Tuesday!

We use up the window frames and door-

ways for kindling, and consequently the doors have gone long ago. I have been smashing up mouldings this morning with an axe. We prefer the dry wood which is built into the walls; it burns better and does n't cause smoke. As soon as smoke is seen rising, the enemy's range-finders get busy and then we suffer.

Another mine went up yesterday; nobody seems to know where. I think it came south from the French lines; it rocked the whole neighborhood for miles. The ground here is a kind of quicksand for a few feet down, and shock is easily transmitted, the whole ground being honeycombed with mines, old trenches, shafts, saps made by French, Belgians, Germans and our own people.

The use for timber of any description is manifold; every little bit is used up. Our chief source of supply of dry wood is from the smashed-up chateaux. Langhof, my home, has been punished almost every day, and after the bombardment lets up men from the neighborhood come to collect the wood torn

up by the shelling. The men of the Tenth East Yorks came up this morning and climbed to the remains of the second story, ripping up the floor boards. The enemy evidently saw them, for the shelling soon started. We have been shelled often here before, but it was nothing compared to this. The shells were carefully placed and came over with disgusting regularity. The buildings rocked and the whole neighborhood shook. Fountains of bricks, mortar, and dirt were spewed up into the air. Trees were torn to shreds, a wall in front of me was hit — and disappeared, a lead statue of Apollo in the garden was hurled through the air and landed fifty yards away crumpled up against the balustrade of the moat.

We were in our cellars, and gradually the shelling crept up towards us. Slowly a solemn dread which soon moulded into a sordid fear took possession of my being. In a flash I began to devise a philosophy of death for my chances were fading with every crash. I took out my pocketbook, containing

some letters from my mother and some personal things, and put them on one of the beams, so that, being in another part of the building, they might perhaps be found some day. The shelling continued and shells dropped completely round the cellars, demolishing nearly everything in sight. The enemy evidently wanted to obliterate the whole place. The smell of the smoke and the dirt from the debris was choking, and every minute we expected to be our last. Suddenly it stopped. Philosophy and fear disappeared simultaneously as I sputtered out a choking laugh of relief. Then Hawkins, my servant, in a scared voice started, and the others joined in, singing the old marching refrain of the Training Camps: —

"Hail, hail, the gang's all here,
What the hell do we care!
What the hell do we care!
Hail, hail, the gang's all here,
What the hell do we care NOW!"

When a man has lived night after night in a trench, he gradually finds it quite possible

to snatch a good night's sleep. In other words, it is merely a case of becoming acclimated to rackets, smells and food. I had always been able to sleep, but on the night following the bombardment of the chateau I just could not doze off. I thrashed about continuously, and while in this restless state harbored the notion that trouble was brewing for me. Every one has had that feeling, the feeling that hangs in your bones and warns you to watch out. Well, that is how I felt.

At last the sun rose and with it came a beautiful morning, warm and sunny. I walked out amongst the ruins to see the extent of the damage caused by the shelling of the previous day. I was waiting for the stew which was cooking on a little fire near the side of the cellar. The "dixie" was resting on two old bayonets, and they in turn rested on bricks at either side. Towards noon a big shell came over and landed in the moat, covering everything around with a coat of evil-smelling, black mud. This shell was fol-

lowed by another, arriving in the part of the ruins where once a cow-shed stood. I was talking to Hawkins, my batman, when I saw him dive across my front and fall flat on his face. At the same time I was in the center of an explosion, a great flame of light and then bricks, wood and cement flew in all directions. For a few seconds I thought I was dead, then I picked myself up and saw that blood was pouring down the front of my jacket. I followed up the stream and found that my right hand was smashed and hanging limp. My men rushed out and I told them it was nothing, but promptly fell in a heap. When I came to, my hand was wrapped up in an emergency bandage, and a stretcher was coming down from Bedford House, an advanced dressing-station, the next house back. To the delight of the men who were carrying it, I waved them away and told them I could walk. Assisted up to the dressing-station by one of my men, I made it. I then made a discovery. A soldier is a man until he's hit, then he's a case. I first had

an injection of "anti-tetanus" in the side, and the fact was recorded on a label tied to my left-hand top pocket button. The doctor tied me up, then said: "You'll soon be all right. Will you have a bottle of English beer or a drop of whiskey?" I had the whiskey. I needed it. All the time I was there the wounded poured in. Seeing them I felt ashamed to be there with only a smashed hand. A corporal came in with both hands blown off and fifty-six other wounds. He had tried to save the men in his bay by throwing back a German bomb and it had gone off in his hands. Hawkins came up later on with my helmet and the fuse head of the shell which blew me up. We were all collected together and waited in the dugouts of the dressing station until dusk. Several shells came close to us. I tried to write to my mother with my left hand, so that when she received the War Office cable she would know I was able to write.

Dusk came, then night, and finally the Ford ambulance cars which were to take us

out of Hell. It was a beautiful night. Belgium looked lovely. The merciful night had thrown a veil over the war scars on the land and a moon was shining. I was told to sit up in the seat with the driver. We traveled along one road, then the shelling became so bad that the drivers decided to go back and take another road which was running nearly parallel. Back over the line the planes of the Royal Flying Corps were bombing the Forest of Houltholst, and the bursting of the shrapnel from the German anti-aircraft guns pierced the velvet of the sky like stars as we went out of Belgium into France.

Several times shells burst on the road, and from the inside of the car came the stifled groans of the men as the Ford hit limbs of trees and shell-holes.

Our first stop was a ruined windmill, the walls of which were nearly six feet thick. Here the dangerous cases were taken off and attended to. The last I saw of the corporal was after they had cut off his coat at the

seams and the doctors were taking a piece of wire out of his chest. While I was waiting a chaplin asked me if I would like a cup of coffee or some whiskey, realising that it would take some time to get the coffee made I had some more whiskey.

I was given two more tags, which this time were tied on buttons at the top of my jacket. I stayed here about two hours, then I was sent to a clearing hospital. It was here that I met the first nurses. They were two fine, splendid women who were wearing the scarlet hoods of the British Regular Army nurse. They were both strong and quite capable of handling a man, even if he became delirious. One of them quickly got me into bed. I apologized for my terribly dirty state, but I was told that it made no difference; they were used to it. To be between clean sheets again was wonderful. I felt I wanted to go to sleep forever. Suddenly a roar, and a terrible explosion. The hospital was being bombed; a bomb had dropped within a hundred yards of my tent. This was the

German reprisal for our bombing Houltholst. They deliberately bombed a hospital. The doctor at this hospital next day looked at my hand and said in a nonchalant way, "Looks as though you will lose it." At that time it did n't strike me as a great loss to lose a hand, even if it was my "painting hand."

The hospital train of the next day was crowded and the nurse in charge of my coach was named Keene. We tried in the little spare time she had to see if we could n't work out our genealogy and find out if we were even remotely connected, but before we did we came to the station of Étaples and then went to the Duchess of Westminster Hospital at Latouquet. Here I was operated on. A piece of Krupp's steel was taken out of my hand and a rubber drainage tube inserted instead. The Duchess used to come round a great deal and won everybody's affection. She used to sit on my bed and talk to me about pleasant things. So unlike many people who visit hospitals and ask the patients silly war questions, such as: "How

does it feel to be wounded?" or "Which hurts more, a bayonet or a shell wound?" One exasperated Tommy, when asked if the shell hit him, said: "Naw, it crept up behind and bit me."

FINIS

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